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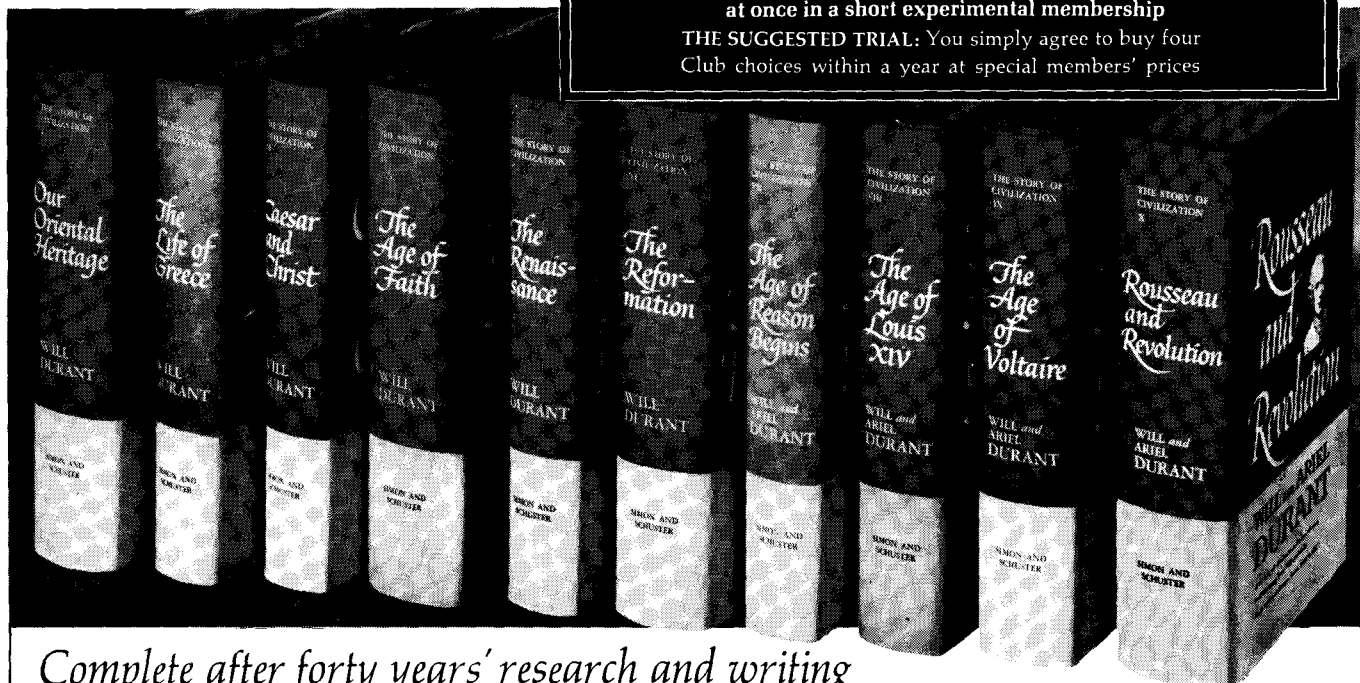


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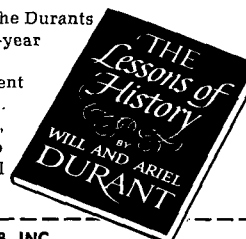
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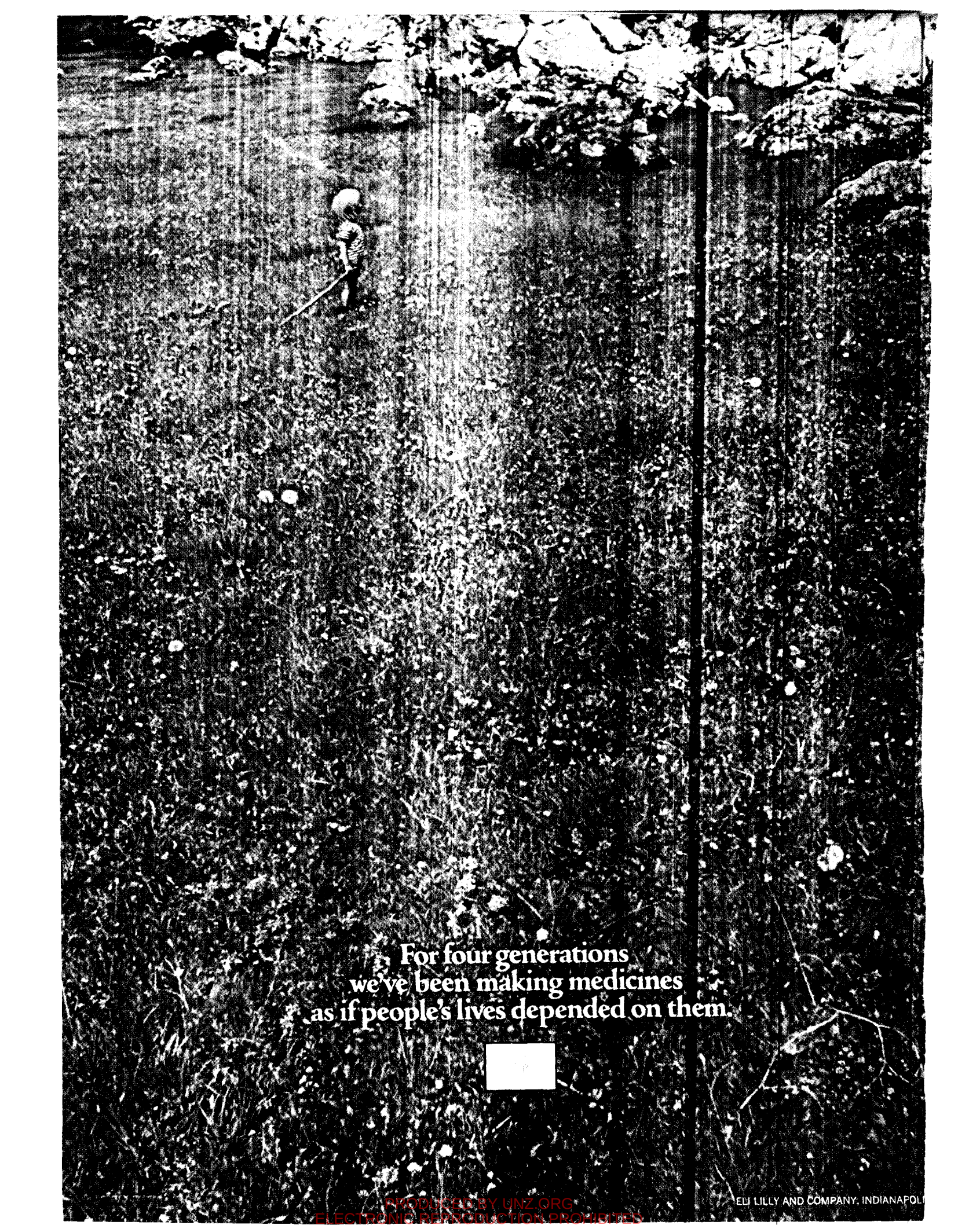
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'ADAM SMITH'	43	The Last Days of Cowboy Capitalism
DAVID HALBERSTAM	56	How the Economy Went Haywire
ROBERT GRAVES	60	St. Antony of Padua. <i>A Poem</i>
FERNANDO KRAHN	61	The Last Laugh
DONALD BARTHELME	62	The Sandman. <i>A Story</i>
JAROLD RAMSEY	65	Poem for Jean Tinguely
MELVIN MADDOCKS	66	Brave New Marriage
R. D. SKILLINGS	70	Two Men. <i>An Atlantic "First"</i>
LINDA ARKING	72	Notes on an Italian Hill Town
WARD JUST	82	Simpson's Wife. <i>A Story</i>
BARRY SPACKS	87	The Pale Ones. <i>A Poem</i>
W. H. AUDEN	88	Three Poems
ARTHUR T. HADLEY	90	"Is This Like Your War, Sir?"

Reports & Comment

ROBERT SAM ANSON	6	Miami Beach: McGovern
MICHAEL JANEWAY	10	Miami Beach: The Democrats
ELIZABETH DREW	13	Washington
HEDRICK SMITH	22	Moscow

	4	The Editor's Page
L. E. SISSMAN	30	Innocent Bystander
	34	The Mail
	40	Contributors

Life & Letters

WILLIAM ABRAHAMS	96	A Seagull Named Irving
EDWIN NEWMAN	98	Steak Media, Please
RICHARD POIRIER	100	Balanchine/Stravinsky
EDWARD WEEKS	104	The Peripatetic Reviewer
PHOEBE ADAMS	110	Short Reviews: Books

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The trial of Daniel Ellsberg and Anthony Russo now under way in Los Angeles and the impending second Ellsberg trial in Boston involve matters that go far beyond the specifics of the indictment and the charges of the prosecution. That is why many people, including some who are not particularly sympathetic to Ellsberg and some who disapprove of his acts, are watching the proceedings with grave concern. The actual, rather narrow issues of the case—whether the defendants illegally took possession of and made copies of classified government documents and delivered them to persons not entitled to see them—are important and deserve to be put to judge and jury for a verdict. A larger question is, What is the government hoping to accomplish with the trials beyond seeking punishment for those directly involved in the passing (and publication?) of the Pentagon Papers? This is a question that bothers a lot of us, for one may infer that the Administration, in pressing the case the way it has been in Los Angeles and in Boston, and in its frequent complaints about the media, is in effect attacking the whole system whereby information about the policies and activities of the federal government reaches the public. That system could be severely inhibited if the outcome of the Pentagon Papers trials were to fortify the already pervasive use of information classification in Washington and to suppress the long-standing cooperation between government officials and journalists in making classified information usefully, if selectively, available to the public.

Anyone who has worked as a journalist or as an official in the executive branch in Washington (and I have worked as both) knows how the game goes and how important it is to what we journalists call, *ad nauseam*, “the people’s right to know.” It’s an imperfect system, to say the least, without written rules, shaped by vague guidelines, and reliant on common sense and calculated risks. Sometimes there are slips; sometimes there are “leaks” or misinterpretations that drive Presidents and Cabinet secretaries up

walls. Sometimes the system is abused, by officials trying to play the game for personal gain or by newsmen choosing sensation over accuracy.

Obviously, those responsible for governing in an insecure world need privacy and secrecy in which to execute plans and policies, and there have to be rules for deciding when to conceal and when to reveal. At the same time, this need to conceal demands constant scrutiny and restudy. The entire classification system is obscure, contradictory, and open to many interpretations. Great volumes of material become unduly classified. When in doubt, the unwritten rule is, put a “Secret” stamp on it. Much remains technically classified that in substance has long ago moved into public ken. Somehow over the years, government, press, and public have found ways to push pertinent classified information into the public domain so that those who care enough to pay attention may know what their government is thinking or planning or doing.

Government officials at many levels participate in the continuing process of ad hoc “declassification”—through formal speeches, testimony to the Congress, publication of documents, and (particularly in the case of recently departed officials) in memoirs and other writings. The overwhelming bulk of this information flows daily from government to the public through the media. Government and press have long been willing partners; officials take responsibility for putting out formerly “classified” information, the press takes responsibility for delivering it discreetly and, sometimes, even effectively. If the letter of the regulations were to be applied stringently, the flow would diminish to a trickle. Perhaps it would dry up. The public’s access to essential information would be subject to the arbitrary decisions of a few government administrators.

Robert Manning

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REPORTS & COMMENT

MIAMI BEACH

1. McGovern

Even in victory, George McGovern was an improbable figure, perhaps even to George McGovern himself. Outwardly, at least, he has been the most self-confident kind of man. His public statements during the primary campaign were plain and to the point; if anything, they were almost too blunt, too straightforward, too lacking in self-analysis and qualification. In this he stood in contrast to Edmund Muskie, who became, in cruel caricature, a personification of indecisiveness. Once, early in the campaign, a persistent Green Bay, Wisconsin, television interviewer demanded of McGovern, who at the time had just slipped from 5 percent to 3 percent in the polls, "Are you a doubter?" "Doubt?" McGovern replied, as if he were just being introduced to the concept for the first time. "Doubt about what?" "About anything," the reporter pressed. "Just about life." Said McGovern: "No."

Even his campaign signs reflected it. They didn't merely suggest "McGOVERN FOR PRESIDENT"; they insisted on it, "PRESIDENT MCGOVERN, '72," as if the primaries, the convention, and finally the election itself were only technical problems on the way to an inevitable Inauguration Day.

Miami Beach, though, was different and, in its way, intensely revealing of a man almost as little known or understood as, yes, Richard Nixon. On Tuesday of convention week, late in the afternoon, the candidate and certain nominee had just been roused from a sound nap. He was tired and a

little cranky. Monday, the crucial California credentials challenge had been settled in his favor. The day had been a long one, exhausting, and he had just, as he put it, "zonked," when Hubert Humphrey was on the phone, waking him at three in the morning to offer his congratulations.

So, even now, he was tired. In fact, he looked awful. To a friend, he seemed to have lost twenty pounds in the last year. The lines in his face had deepened into dark rivulets, and for the moment at least, sleepy and vulnerable, he looked very, very old.

McGovern was ready to talk in a moment, though, droning back the answers as fast as the questions clicked out. Gradually he settled into the sofa and propped his feet up on the coffee table in front of him. Then, the obvious question: "How does it feel to be Democratic nominee?" For the first time since the interview began, McGovern was more than routinely interested. It almost seemed that after a year and a half of answering thousands of questions, from defense spending to how he parts his hair, and having come back hard and finely chiseled, here was one query he had never considered.

"You know," he said finally, "I haven't really stopped to think about it. I have delayed reactions to these kinds of things. I guess a couple of weeks from now, when I am out in the Black Hills, it will suddenly strike me, what has happened and who I am."

Who is he?

A nomination for President, and all that it portends, is enough to give any man pause. And so it is even for

George McGovern, a most unexistential person. By now, if his prediction is right—and all of them have been, as his slogan puts it, "right from the start"—it will be clear to him who he is and what his identity means.

But will it change him? And from what to what? Miami, among all the other things it did, underscored once again that neither his friends nor his enemies have a clear understanding of who George McGovern is, how he has come to be that way, and where his nomination is likely to take not only him but all of us.

Some things, of course, should have been obvious from the beginning, and by convention time in Miami Beach, they were. For instance, by convention time it had become an article of journalistic faith that George McGovern had assembled an awesomely efficient campaign organization. (Interestingly, the only serious quarrel with this contention came from the "brilliant"—as they were invariably described—members of the organization itself. McGovern's campaign manager Gary Hart remarked at one point, with more perception than wit, "There is less to this campaign than meets the eye.") Theodore White, the chronicler of presidential campaigns, to cite only one example, had, by July, already made up his mind that the success of George McGovern could be attributed almost exclusively to the competence of his campaign team. By Miami Beach, there was also general, if more grudging recognition that there seemed to be something "out there" among the people that had earlier not been recognized or appreciated; it was most often called an "anti" feeling. The very qualities that made McGovern seem such an improbable candidate

to the professionals—the supposed radicalism, the acknowledged lack of charisma, even that voice—were what made him so appealing to this year's crop of more than uncommonly alienated voters.

Those were the givens, and Miami Beach did little to disturb them. The McGovern "machine" provided a dazzling display of its prowess. Indeed, almost everything about the convention was predictable save one: the candidate himself. At Miami Beach, George McGovern, for the first time in the long campaign, puzzled, bewildered, even disheartened many of the people who worked so hard and so long to get him the nomination. In the process, he even managed to offend a lot who hadn't.

There was, first of all, the matter of Mayor Daley and his fifty-eight delegates. Despite his aides', as well as his own, protestations that they did everything humanly possible to "force" Daley to accept a compromise that would have seated him and his delegates as one-half-vote coequals with the Jesse Jackson-William Singer insurgents, there remains doubt about just how much "everything" really represented. The senator himself held out no personal animus for the mayor, even after Daley bluntly informed him by phone, just days before the mayor's credentials were stripped, that McGovern was "beaten," and that he, Daley, would offer no aid on the California challenge. McGovern was still inclined to work for a compromise, even one that would put the Jackson-Singer forces at a severe disadvantage. But after the credentials committee denied him the full fruits of his California victory, events were in the saddle—with McGovern unwilling, and quite possibly unable, to unhorse them.

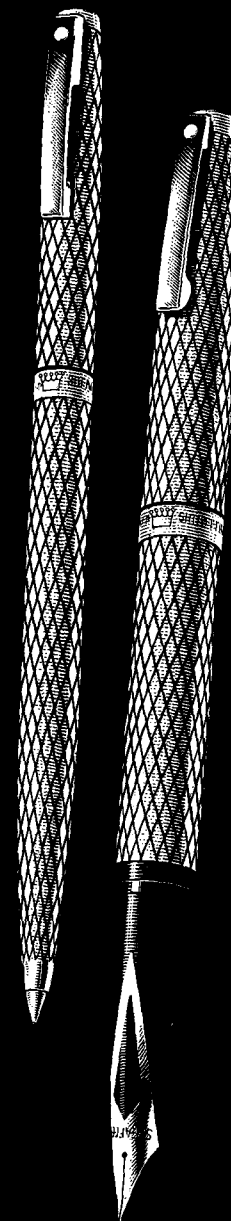
Daley's intransigence was symbolized by his own compromise proposal, which would have seated the Jackson-Singer delegates, attaching some of them to every delegation *except* Illinois'. That, coupled with the desire of McGovern partisans to "stick it" to Daley for 1968 ("He needs us in Illinois just as much as we need him," said Frank Mankiewicz), could produce only one result.

What is fascinating about the Illinois debacle, and instructive in the ways of George McGovern, is not the manner of Daley's unseating, or even what could have been done to pre-

vent it, but McGovern's feelings for the parties involved. The convenient assumption is that George McGovern, that firebrand of reform, was instinctively the champion of Messrs. Jackson and Singer. In fact, the precise opposite was true. Politics aside, McGovern's real sympathy lay with the mayor. McGovern has never been personally close to Jackson, who offended him during the 1968 convention by keeping him waiting for an hour and a half in ninety-degree-plus heat to speak to a massive congregation of black Chicagoans. If anything, he is less sympathetic to Alderman Singer, who is at least as personally ambitious as he is a committed reformer. McGovern, who came to political maturity as chief organizer for the South Dakota Democratic Party, for all his newfound friends and liberal causes, remains at gut level a traditional organization man. He knows the problems of organization men, and suffers with them. McGovern, above all, knows that while kids and reformers come and go, it is the organization men—the so-called hacks of the Daley machine—who stay on to do the dull dirty work that has made the Democratic Party the most consistently vital political force in the country. McGovern should know. He began, in conventional terms, as a "hack" himself.

McGovern also respects Daley not only for the usual reasons but because Daley was the first major political power to take him seriously. Even before McGovern left Chicago in 1968, when his thirteen-day quixotic campaign for the presidency had brought him all of 146½ votes for the nomination, Daley took him aside and in almost fatherly tones advised, "My dear mother, God rest her soul, always told me, 'Richard, as one door closes, another door opens.'" To a recent interviewer, McGovern put it much less cryptically. "He [Daley] said to me, 'Well, you know the candidate in seventy-two is probably going to be young Kennedy or you.' That made a big impression on me."

The realization that the prairie populist is a political soul mate of the big-city boss may have been disillusioning to purists in the McGovern camp, but it was not nearly as crushing as the recognition in Miami Beach that—wonder of wonders—there is some old-fashioned expediency in their man. One ex-



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MIAMI BEACH

ample was McGovern's deliberation on the matter of his running mate. Naturally, Edward Kennedy was McGovern's first choice. But in fact, McGovern may privately have been relieved when the call came in from Hyannisport, confirming that "for very real personal reasons" the surviving Kennedy brother would not be available. In the first place, McGovern's concern for the Kennedy family is very deep. After Robert Kennedy's assassination in 1968, McGovern for a time blamed himself for the tragedy. "If I had run, maybe none of this would have happened," he told Allard Lowenstein on his way home from the funeral. The thought of exposing the final Kennedy brother to an assassin's bullet must have preyed on McGovern's mind. Secondly, he and Ted Kennedy have never enjoyed the relationship McGovern shared with Robert. An admirer of Kennedy's political abilities, McGovern has nonetheless regarded Kennedy as something less than a complete person. Nor, finally, is it for nothing that McGovern never formally asked Kennedy for his endorsement. McGovern was determined, says one of his closest advisers, "to do this thing on his own. He didn't need Teddy's help." Having done it all on his own, it is difficult to see why McGovern would welcome a running mate who would very likely overshadow him in the general election.

With Kennedy out of the running, the field was wide open. If he had had his druthers, McGovern would have tapped Wisconsin's Gaylord Nelson, his closest friend in the Senate and a man whom he respects enormously and relies on for counsel. But eventually, the choice devolved on Thomas Eagleton. Eagleton's ties with labor, his reputation for moderation, his demonstrated ability to get on with the regulars, and above all his Roman Catholicism were significant factors in the final selection. Eagleton's history of hospitalizations was not, by the candidates' accounts, brought into their deliberations with each other, inexplicably. After the story surfaced, McGovern's choice seemed hasty, for all the expediency of his instinct.

More curious, however, than the selection of Eagleton or the cozying to Daley, and less explicable than either, was McGovern's statement on Tuesday of convention week to Families for Immediate Release, an anti-war organization of relatives of POW's and servicemen missing in action. A delegation of the organization came to Miami Beach to endorse McGovern's candidacy. One of the members, Mrs. Valerie Kushner, whose husband has been a prisoner of the National Liberation Front for five years, also seconded McGovern's nomination.

In a statement read to the press by Frank Mankiewicz, McGovern promised the wives that, while he would order an immediate cease-fire on Inauguration Day, terminate military aid to the Thieu regime, and withdraw all U.S. military personnel from Indochina (meaning Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos) within ninety days after taking office, he would maintain forces at bases in Thailand and on the Tonkin Gulf until the prisoners were returned and an accounting made of all the missing.

Unclean

McGovern's promise provoked an immediate uproar, among both his supporters, and the protesters until then docilely encamped in Flamingo Park. The kids, about two hundred of them, reacted by staging a noisy sit-in in the lobby of the Doral Beach, McGovern's headquarters hotel. Speaker after speaker denounced him as a "sellout" and a "puppet of the bosses," until McGovern himself felt compelled to come down from his penthouse and personally cool their tempers. The rhetoric of McGovern's delegates and supporters was more temperate, but the moment of disenchantment was the same.

The McGovern high command reacted twenty-four hours later by issuing a "clarification" underscoring McGovern's intention to end the fighting and withdraw all U.S. forces from the area, including Thailand and Tonkin, once the prisoners were returned. The original statement, the clarification insisted, represented no change from previous policy. What led to the confusion, went the explanation, was a misunderstanding by the press.

In fact, as McGovern well knew,

there had been no misunderstanding by the press or anyone else. The Thailand-Tonkin proviso did present a sharp departure from his previous policy, which in the past had clearly spelled out that withdrawal from Indochina specifically encompassed Thailand and Tonkin as well, with no preconditions.

The only reasonable impression an observer could get was that, as on welfare reform, McGovern was waffling, and this time lying in the bargain. No matter that not even the North Vietnamese had ever insisted on a complete withdrawal from Thailand and Tonkin as a precondition to releasing the prisoners. Vietnam was supposed to be McGovern's cleanest issue, and now he was sullying it, apparently for the sake of a few votes to the right of him.

The actual explanation for McGovern's behavior, when it emerged a few days later in conversation with the staffman who wrote the statement, was at once less disturbing and more perplexing. According to the staffman, the McGovern camp had known for some time that it would have to formulate some sort of acceptable answer to the constantly posed query, "But what if they don't let the prisoners go when the war is over?" McGovern himself, based on conversations with the Vietnamese in Paris, was personally convinced that the problem of the prisoners not being released after the withdrawal of American forces was purely hypothetical. For one thing, why would the North Vietnamese want to keep them? Rational as this explanation was, McGovern also knew it was not enough to allay the emotional fears of the POW-MIA wives, a potent political force and women for whom McGovern felt considerable personal sympathy. The logical moment to answer that "what-if" question, McGovern and his advisers concluded, was before a forum of wives themselves. Unfortunately, they timed the forum at the worst possible moment: smack in the middle of the Democratic convention.

The staffman drafted the original statement and took it to McGovern's penthouse on the seventeenth floor of the Doral for the candidate's personal approval. It was past midnight when he arrived, and Willie Brown, a black assemblyman from California, had just concluded his denunciation of

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the anti-McGovern credentials report. As might be expected, McGovern's attention was on the television set in front of him, where, at that moment, the chances of his nomination were being decided. Whether McGovern actually realized what he was reading is not clear. In any case, he approved the statement without any additions or subtractions, and the staffer whipped it into final form. Then the storm broke.

Fortunately for McGovern, his newly revised Vietnam policy stopped far short of being a calamity. A question, even one that raised doubts, yes. Evidently, people accept McGovern's explanations and trust that he will carry through with them. After all, if George McGovern cannot be believed on Vietnam, what can he be believed on?

McGovern has a knack for committing potentially disastrous mistakes and then, if not turning them to advantage, at least neutralizing them. "He is the most cliffhanging guy I have ever met in politics," says a longtime political pro and McGovern operative. And yet McGovern always seems to pull himself back—not all

the way up, but just out of immediate danger. The drama, one might say, is in the dangling.

Of course, come the fall, it will be his Republican opponents who are at the top of the cliff, doing their damndest to stomp on McGovern's fingertips. The question, then, is whether a bare handhold is enough, whether McGovern will be able to trust, as he always has in the past, that goodness (buttressed by indefatigable hard work) will win out.

Few people question McGovern's goodness, or doubt that his nomination was an extraordinary achievement. It is what McGovern will become that is at issue. After the experience of Miami Beach, can he be trusted with quite the abandon that he has been in the past? What will be the cost of the "moderation" that labor and the political pros are demanding, and how deep will it run? The opportunity to be a part of history has always been a powerful lure for George McGovern, himself a teacher and writer of history. When all the explanations are in, and the average politician's ego drive accounted for, it is that sense of being at

the head of powerful historic forces that seems to drive him, even in the face of overwhelming odds. McGovern has said more than once that he will be President, that the history of the moment makes it not only possible but nearly inevitable. How much is McGovern willing to give, of himself and what he believes, to make that inevitability a certainty?

Anyone who claims to know the answers knows George McGovern better than the nominee knows himself. McGovern has come as far as he has because, more than most men, he has followed his instincts, even toward what others said was folly. Up to now, those instincts have demanded the boldest course.

Now, though, McGovern is in transition. Politically and personally, he is in a state of flux. Those who are close to him, who have access to his mind as well as his ear predict that far from moderating, McGovern will stiffen, toughening both himself and his ideas. In the details, there will be concessions—to Daley, to labor, to the center. For the true believers, the summer and fall may be painful. But they will miss the real man, McGovern's advisers say; there at the core, where it matters, will be hardness. But that is a biased view, however well informed. Only one man can truly know, and even for him, there is wonder.

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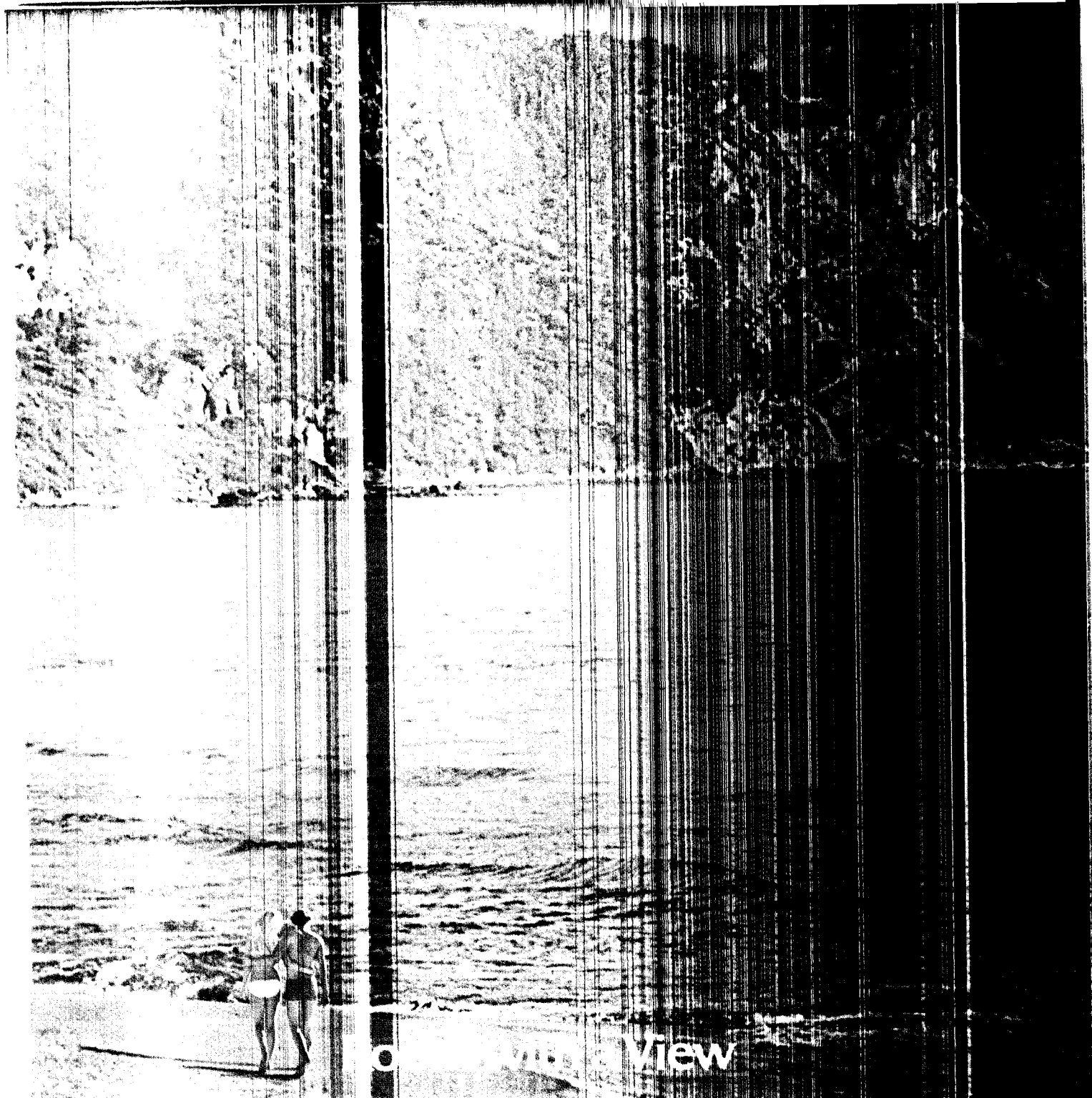


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2. The Democrats

Hubert Humphrey was nominated for President by the Democratic National Convention in 1968 at the sour mercy of three men: Lyndon Johnson, Richard Daley, and John Connally. Johnson found it not to his choosing to attend the 1972 convention, Daley found it not within his power, and Connally had, as it were, a prior commitment. The leading candidate got himself nominated beholden to none of the traditional brokerage houses of power. The contrast with what happened in 1968 was extraordinarily complete. The convention itself, so manifestly the product of delegate selection democratization, was a kind of promise that the spirit of reform in politics,



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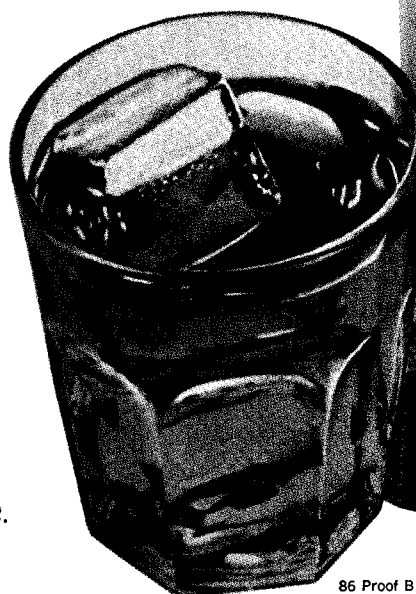
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bankrupted for some seasons now, was back in business. Unbossed, George McGovern now has the one asset Humphrey lacked in 1968: control of his own campaign, autonomy. But he lacks the one asset that almost pulled Humphrey through then: organized labor's determined, complete support.

The proposition that McGovern's chances in November are better than the party professionals rate them, no matter what the leaders of organized labor do or fail to do, is based on a sense of the positive spirit at Miami Beach. Representing the minority of those present were the Democratic pros, who spoke of their party's choice of McGovern in metaphors having to do with ending one's life by one's own hand: the words that flew around were "suicide," "self-destruction," and "hara-kiri." Vindication of this view rests on the re-election of Richard Nixon. In the meantime, the terminology can be tossed back at the professionals, and another Japanese term, "kamikaze," added. Who hurt the party's fortunes more, the man who legitimately won the lion's share of the delegates, or those who tried to thwart his nomination? People who commit suicide often want to be stopped. If, as is arguable, the anti-McGovern coalition behaved as "suicidally" as they said the party did in nominating McGovern, the worst that can be said of the nominee is that he did not try harder, earlier, to reach out to his enemies, to calm their fears and furies. Before his nomination, he communicated either unproductively or not at all with Mayor Daley, labor leaders, Southern governors, and an individual readier than most of the others to play middleman, Wilbur Mills.

At the same time, he was alert to the danger that such contact could lead to entrapment in one of the subplots of the convention: if McGovern's delegate count could not be pulled down, perhaps his strength could be made to work against him (to revert to Japanese, "jujitsu" was the word for this ploy). First let him be shown to be a divisive "rule or ruin" force in a convention neither side could carry, a candidate feared by men and women seeking lesser office who must run with him at the top of the ticket. Then orchestrate a turn to "peacemaker" Edward Kennedy. Wilbur Mills worked hardest at the

scenario. According to conspiracy theories, Daley was independently interested in it. Those close to Mills say that members of the Kennedy family and entourage flirted, on again, off again. Because the scenario was common knowledge around the convention, because of the set of compelling reasons why Kennedy did not openly seek nomination and his sequence of statements about them, the only way the scenario could begin was if the convention blew up. The only way it was going to blow up was if McGovern showed weakness; Humphrey and Muskie were spent. So he stood aloof, at the price of preballoting "unity."

Odds

The one attempt at compromise was over the Illinois delegate dispute, and it blew up in everyone's face. "They're trying to jam it down our throats," an anti-Daleyite said on the convention floor of the effort to give half of the contested Chicago seats to Daley and the other half to his challengers. By "they" this insurgent meant not the Daley forces but the McGovern staff. But Daley wasn't buying, and the McGovern staff bumped into a parliamentary situation that required an unattainable two-thirds vote to put the compromise through. Thus, an irony: McGovern's one major reverse at Miami Beach was the result of an effort (some say wholehearted, some say halfhearted) not to shut his enemies out but to let them in.

In such matters of larger significance, the 1972 Democratic National Convention was as day to night for those who were at Chicago four years ago. There were small differences, too, but suggestive ones. An example: in 1968, some meticulous minds in the field of "security" devised a system for admission to the convention hall involving formidable-looking plastic cards worn around the neck. One had to do a partial stoop to get the card into an electronic thingamajig manned by vigilant attendants. This time, a simple, old-fashioned set of manilla cards with tear-off stubs sufficed (though the guards also stamped one's hand with invisible "twenty-four-hour" ink on the first and last nights of the convention). It was one of the countless signs that "security" was not thought of as a

crisis at Miami Beach, and that it did not become one.

George McGovern left Miami Beach with his most angry adversaries unappeased. Some of the drawing together came faster than was expected when the anger was deep. Mayor Daley was the first to deal himself back in, albeit poker-faced. Daley had never put much stock in Humphrey, Muskie, Jackson; his interest was in Kennedy. But labor fought hard for the other candidates. Beyond George Meany and friends' grudges against McGovern and disagreement with him over issues, beyond the question of which McGovern reforms union members like and which they fear, there is the fact that McGovern owed the embittered leaders of organized labor no more at Miami Beach than he owed Wall Street. Those who opposed him dictated nothing at the convention; they had no veto and not even, as in 1968, a candidate for Vice President. That is a long fall from FDR's command twenty-eight years ago to "clear" political decisions with the late Sidney Hillman, and it hurt.

McGovern left Miami Beach, too, with the Las Vegas odds quoted at 2 to 1 and 4 to 1 against him. But wait. A Southern businessman who supported McGovern from the start happened to be in Las Vegas in January when the odds were 100 to 1 against a McGovern nomination. He put up \$1000. On the steamy July night when McGovern went over the top in Miami Beach, this gentleman cleared \$100,000 from Las Vegas. He is giving most of it to McGovern.

—MICHAEL JANEWAY

WASHINGTON

Contrary to what we were taught, there are not, as of now, three equal branches of government. The Congress has become substantially, and perhaps dangerously, less effective than the executive branch. It lumbers its way through the national agenda, to the extent that it moves at all. And whoever wins the presidential election, with whatever mandate for change, will be faced with the awesome obstacles to change that the Congress has erected.

The two most important questions about Congress are, first, why it does not do more, and second, how much

WASHINGTON

it can be expected to do. Congressional reform has always been a subject for the earnest ones—the province, by default, of the political scientists, the liberals, the outsiders, the losers. But now the connections between the way our political system is organized and the substantive results are becoming more widely recognized.

The performance of the Congress derives both from its own institutional arrangements and from less explicit factors such as mood, atmosphere, historical context, peer pressures, and human nature. And in considering why Congress does not do more, some perspective is in order. A substantial proportion of the members of the Senate and the House of Representatives do not see that there is anything to do. They do not believe that there is much that is wrong in our current national arrangements and activities. Moreover, as one congressman put it, "The axiom around here is that the service you do for constituents, the non-issue stuff, is what gets you elected." Like most institutions, Congress thinks more about its own preservation than about the job to be done. The Navy does the same thing, and so do university faculties. Politicians become intoxicated with the trappings of power: discounts on automobiles and stereo sets; bathrooms in their offices; elevators that take them straight to their floor, disregarding other passengers; being treated like very important people. The rituals, the perquisites, the preservation of power take on magnetic force. There are thus established institutional arrangements which reinforce the status quo.

Outweighed, outwaited

At its most energetic, the Congress is essentially a reactive institution. The most important movements of the past decade—civil rights, women's rights, opposition to the war, environment—originated outside the Congress.

Its major achievements in recent years, as recounted by a number of senators, congressmen, and their aides, have been to reject two Supreme Court nominations, bar the

President from using American ground troops in Laos and Cambodia, and raise questions about military spending. It has initiated significant legislation in only a few areas: child care, higher education, nutrition. It has moved sluggishly, or not at all, on other issues before it: welfare, health policy, organization of government. It is giving a minimum of attention, or no attention at all, to many of the most important questions the country is facing: reconversion of defense and space industries, population growth and distribution, land use, energy policy, consumption of nonrenewable resources, reorganization of political boundaries. It offers no guidance on our future international political and economic arrangements. On questions which have been raised in national political debate—the war, distribution of income and the tax burden, race, individual liberty—the Congress has had difficulty in speaking with any clarity.

To some degree, this is inevitable. The Congress is a legislative body, and legislatures, like political parties, historically and by definition have difficulty with great, divisive issues. Legislatures are collections of people who see their role, to the extent that they look at it, as one of working things out. When issues do not lend themselves to compromise, or provoke sheer rage—as the war and school busing do—legislatures do not work well.

The Congress also finds it difficult to proceed even on issues which are less divisive but on which it does not sense a national disposition. "They want to be in the mainstream," said a Senate aide. Senators who are not in the mainstream are often without honor in their time, and—their colleagues have noticed—defeated. Senators consider the list of fearless, but former, colleagues: Morse, Gruening, Gore, Clark, Douglas. A senator put it a slightly different way: "On those things on which there is a consensus in the country," he said, "the Congress is pretty efficient. It can hold hearings and pass the legislation. But with the country divided three to four ways, it can't come up with the answers." And then he made another significant point: "It isn't as if the Congress isn't working on these problems. It's just that the problems are so intractable." There are things about which Congress, like nearly every-

body else, does not know what to do.

Recent history has left its marks on our national legislature. The skepticism which has overtaken much of the country, the disillusionment which so many feel, have affected the Congress, too. "We're just not doing anything, and there's little interest in doing anything," said Representative Thomas Foley, Democrat of Washington. "We have lost confidence that we know what to do, and that has had a devastating effect." "The war has had a debilitating effect," said another House Democrat, Donald Fraser of Minnesota. "I say that without being able to remember how things were before we had the war. It absorbs our psychic energies. We worry about it, think about it. It affects our attitudes toward everything." The Senate aide was more explicit as we talked about the Senate's legislative record: "They are weary old men," he said. "They have only so much juice in them, and they used it up on the war, the ABM, and fights over nominations." (One result was that when the President returned from Moscow with a strategic arms limitation agreement which he said would require more arms, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee elected not to hold extensive hearings. It did not want to go through the ordeal of listening to "all those scientists" again.)

The lawmakers drew several conclusions from struggles with the White House over legislation dealing with domestic issues and with the war: the President can outweigh and outwait; he can go on television and say that his plan will work; he can put the burden of proof on his opponents, suggesting that they do not know as much as he does and might not be as concerned as he is about the nation's well-being. Most politicians will get within range of this sort of pummeling only so often. The President said from time to time that he would "pull the rug out" from under his opponents on the subject of the war, and a number of them were convinced, unto paralysis, that he would do just that.

Not all the reasons for congressional impotence involve the high drama of political confrontation. It is very difficult in any event for the lawmakers to take concerted action. The quality of ego which motivates most men and women into politics is not conducive to collective activity. The

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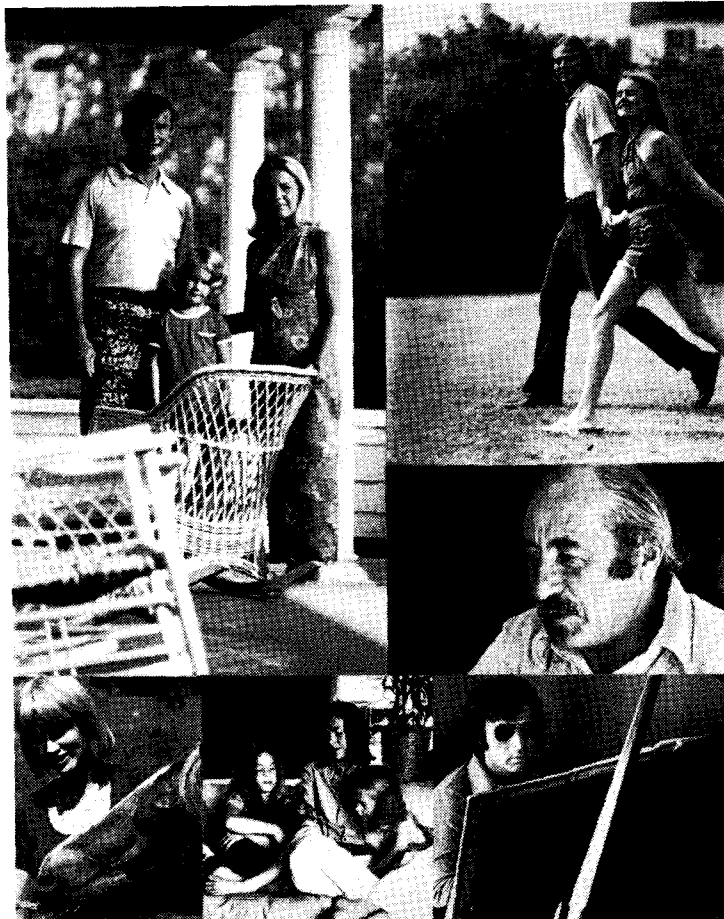
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nature of the congressional routine diffuses energies and power. One pictures the Congress as a place where politicians are constantly clapping each other on the back, talking, trading stories, secrets, or deals; yet members of both the House and the Senate mentioned lack of fraternization as a factor in their powerlessness. "There is a sense of isolation that most members experience here," said Congressman Fraser. "They don't talk to each other, except on little things. An international conference may be the only place we hear a colleague express himself on the larger questions. Otherwise, we're caught up in mail, the office, constituents' demands, and so on. All this tends to keep the Congress atomized."

"Suppose you have the best god-damn idea in the world," said one senator. "You can't get people to listen to you. Suppose I got on the phone right now and called every member of the Senate. I would have to be able to explain my amendment in thirty seconds or their eyes would glaze over, and even then they'd say, 'I appreciate your calling and I'll think about it.' So then I would write every senator, and mostly I would get a polite form letter back. If you offer the greatest idea in the world on the Senate floor, sure as hell nobody's going to hear you give the speech because nobody's there. Theoretically, they could read your speech in the *Congressional Record*, but they don't. Then they file in and ask a staffer 'What's this?' and decide how to vote on your amendment on the basis of who offered it, whether they want to offend a committee chairman who opposes it, and only sometimes what they think about the substance of it, if they know."

There are other factors which contribute to the built-in inertia of the Congress. One of the most important, and least tangible, is peer group pressure. "The clubby aspects are too overwhelming," said one Senate man. "There is the fraternal aspect: these are my brothers, my friends. Of course, they aren't real friendships. Friendships don't exist in this town. It's used as an excuse for inactivity." It is what one senator describes as the "good-old-boy" pressure, and it works. There is also the self-inter-

ested obeisance to the elders: the reluctance to offend the senior members who control committee assignments, subcommittee chairmanships, the size of one's staff.

Despite all of these pressures, some lawmakers—a very few of them—are able to turn in effective performances. This is more possible in the Senate, because of its smaller size, than in the House. Walter Mondale of Minnesota and Philip Hart of Michigan, both Democrats, are perhaps the most widely respected on both sides of the aisle for effectiveness. But most of the congressmen and senators who come to Washington eager to change the world become worn down, tired, discouraged. The most vital members of the House see a possible escape in running for the Senate. Bored senators go out and make speeches, brood in their offices, increase their drinking, run for President.

Press releases vs. power

The practices by which the Congress proceeds skew the substance of its work. However representative of the country the Senate and the House, in the large, may be, and my guess is that they are fairly representative, the rules and customs favor the forces of conservatism. It is not just that the conservatives have seized the machinery but also that the liberals have let it happen. The seniority system is one of the more familiar targets of liberal wrath, yet it survives because a sufficient number of liberals have cooperated in its preservation. The axiom that where a man stands depends on where he sits applies here: many quondam reformers begin to see the merits of seniority as their own years in office accumulate. (The seniority system of the Congress is a custom, not a rule, and it has at least the virtue, such as it is, of singularity. No other parliament, and no state legislature, uses it with such rigidity and grants it such sanctity.) Moreover, the argument of many congressmen that the alternative would be chaos does reflect some self-knowledge. The House and the Senate are collections of manipulative people whose political careers are built upon skill in maneuvering and circuitous operation. The elaborate honoring of a senile committee chairman therefore spares them the un-

leashing of their own worst impulses. They need a law of the jungle.

The conservative forces have carefully secured control of the processes for making decisions on the issues which, more than any others, define our national life: the ways in which taxes are collected and revenues are appropriated. They dominate the four most important committees in the Congress: the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee, which deal with taxes, and the Appropriations Committees of the two chambers, which have jurisdiction over the budget. "There is a saying around here," said one senator, "that the conservatives will allow the liberals to say 'what' if the conservatives can say 'how much.'" Now that issues of economic justice are of major national concern, the way in which the Congress decides them deserves scrutiny.

While the conservatives, utilizing their power over committee assignments, have protected these particular pea patches, the liberals have not tried very hard to intrude. "The liberals are always ten years late in figuring out where the power is," said a Senate aide. The liberals scrambled for seats on committees dealing with issues that seemed more glamorous, such as foreign policy, or of more concern to their constituencies, such as education and labor and housing. When they began to understand the substantive consequences of the committee allocations, and some liberals attained sufficient seniority to seek seats on the tax and revenue committees, many were reluctant to do so. They were loath to surrender the seniority they had attained within their own committees, to move to committees where the work is complex and sometimes heavy going, where they would be outnumbered and outmaneuvered by the conservatives, and where there might be less opportunity for publicity. Many a liberal prefers a press release to power.

"That group," said a Senate aide about the Finance Committee, "makes Attila the Hun look like Norman Thomas." His savored overstatement bespoke the widely agreed-upon point that the Senate Finance Committee is far more conservative than the Senate as a whole, even more at variance with its collective body than is Ways and Means with the House. The only representative of

a major industrial state on the Finance Committee is Robert Griffin, Republican of Michigan, who is not very liberal except by comparison with the rest of the Republican committee membership. Finance and Ways and Means have staked out jurisdiction over not only taxes but also welfare, social security, trade, revenue sharing, and, by a rather tenuous rationale, health. Both operate by rather exceptional procedures, even for the Congress.

War room

One way for a relatively junior member of the Congress to draw attention to an issue and, despite a reluctant committee chairman, to win legislation on it, is to secure chairmanship of a subcommittee. In such a position, he can hire staff, conduct investigations, and hold hearings. The House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee avoid the potential danger of independent functioning on the part of younger members simply by not having subcommittees. The chairmen of these two committees, Representative Wilbur Mills of Arkansas and Senator Russell Long of Louisiana, both Democrats, further increase their own power by other means. Neither permits members of his committee to bring their own staff assistants to meetings, forcing the members to rely on the staffs selected by the chairmen. "Very often," said a senator who serves on the Finance Committee, "I am voting in the dark." The Ways and Means Committee operates with a kind of war-room atmosphere. Members are not permitted to remove staff studies from the committee room.

Almost all congressional committees do their most important work—deciding the final details of legislation—in secret; these are called "mark-up" sessions. But Finance and Ways and Means compound the practice of secrecy, with substantial effects. According to recently adopted congressional rules, members' positions on roll-call votes taken within the committees are supposed to be made public; Finance and Ways and Means avoid this by not taking roll-call votes. Closed committee sessions add to the pressures to compromise, to swap favors, to blur issues. "The pressures for compromise," said a

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WASHINGTON

member of one of these committees, "are nearly overwhelming—the pressures for pleasantness, for comity, for going along. If you offer a strong amendment, they ask you not to press your case. They say, 'Maybe we can work something out.'" Billions of dollars in national treasure, in taxes which all of us must pay, are traded in the secret sessions during which the committees decide the terms of tax bills. On the last day of the Ways and Means consideration of the 1969 tax reform act, one and a half billion dollars in potential annual tax revenues were surrendered. In a series of trades, committee members who watch over the interests of oil, real estate, farms, and tax-free municipal bonds saw to it that potential tax increases on these economic sectors were dropped. The late John Watts, Democrat of Kentucky, was known for his alert attention to the tax burdens on "bourbon, racehorses, and tobacco." He was ready to support the tax-free status of municipal bonds in exchange for the help of a city representative on the question of horses. Representatives from Michigan work to protect the automobile industry from what they consider burdensome taxes. Care is always taken that representatives of oil-producing states, such as Texas and Louisiana, sit on Finance and Ways and Means to keep watch over the oil depletion allowance.

"I've never seen anything like that," said a member of the Senate Finance Committee of his group's consideration of tax reform in 1969. "The thing that's really deadly for the public interest is the closed mark-up session. Enormous fees are made by lawyers and lobbyists for dealing with what look like esoteric questions: for example, what day and hour a change in the tax code becomes effective. It can mean millions to a company. Tax revision can take a month and a half of mark-up, and the tendency in the committee is to go along with the other fellow's motion. Part of the reason why it works is that it meets in secret, and no roll-call votes are taken. By the time it comes to the Senate floor, even if a senator made it his life's work, he can't know what's going on."

To ensure that the other represen-

tatives do not disturb its arrangements, the Ways and Means Committee brings its bills to the House floor under what is known as a "closed rule," barring amendments. The rationale is that if tax bills were open to floor amendments, there might be irresponsible tax cuts and log-rolling on a grand scale. The dilemma is that this is true; but the closed rule effectively denies a voice in tax legislation to all but the twenty-five representatives on the Ways and Means Committee. (The closed rule is invoked for other Ways and Means legislation, including, this year, for reasons more obscure, that dealing with revenue sharing.) "I represent a half-million people," said Morris K. Udall, Democrat of Arizona, "and I am forbidden to have any say in the tax code. Any drunk can stagger out of the Senate cloakroom with a two-hundred-page amendment to the Internal Revenue Code and get a roll-call vote on it." Senator Long and Congressman Mills, especially Mills, dominate the sessions in which, after each chamber has passed the tax bills, members of their respective committees get together and—in secret, as is the rule with all Senate-House conference committees—work out a compromise. I once asked Russell Long what he thought of the idea of having House-Senate conferences on bills open to the public. In that case, he said, "they'd probably have a meeting before the meeting."

The Ways and Means Committee Democrats have still another means of enforcing their will. In a rather bizarre arrangement, they also act as the group that makes the House Democratic committee assignments. "Do not underestimate that," said Udall. "Not only do the freshmen quail before them and fawn over them but also the brothers are always looking around for openings on better committees. So there isn't likely to be a challenge to them."

What all of this adds up to is that those who have more access to the tax-writing committees, particularly Ways and Means, have more voice in what the tax code says, and the access is by no means equally spread among the various elements in our society. "Everyone has a stake in tax reform," said a member of the Ways and Means Committee, "but the public doesn't have the focal point that the



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WASHINGTON

interests have. Those guys are smart. They come in and explain the equity of their position and tell you how if they didn't have it there would be massive unemployment, and all that. The Red Cross and the charities are there to tell you about the great works they do. The fifty million-odd people who work in factories and make twelve thousand dollars a year are not represented." Labor has failed to understand the importance of the tax laws, and to gain access to the processes by which these laws are framed.

Other economic interests cultivate the staff and raise money for the politicians. "They build up a friendship," says a member of the Finance Committee, "that makes it hard to be against a guy if he has a halfway decent proposition. By and large, the big contributions come from the privileged. They're not asking for any new privileges. Therefore, a man can say, 'Sure, I got a lot of money from the oil companies, but they never asked me for a thing.' That's because

what they want is protection of the status quo. It's easy for liberals to be against the oil depletion allowance, but not against capital gains. By and large, Wall Street gives you money because you're against the war, or for health, but you think long and hard before being against capital gains, or depreciation on real estate."

It is easy, however, to make too much of the role of "the interests." Essentially, according to many of their colleagues, the politicians who make up the Finance and Ways and Means Committees believe in what they do. Wilbur Mills has proposed a review of the tax code, and has said that the burden of proof will be on those who benefit from the present tax preferences. "I think," said a member of Ways and Means, "that they will prove it to the satisfaction of the committee."

Arrangements

If one accepts the view that information is power, the significance of the extensive secrecy with which the Congress proceeds can be appreciated. Not only are all Senate-House

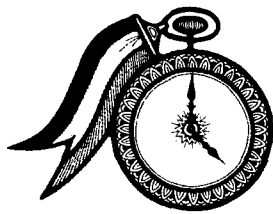
conferences to work out final forms of legislation secret, but so are almost all of the sessions in which committees first write the bills. Only the House Education and Labor Committee regularly makes its decisions on legislation in public. The House Appropriations subcommittees hold many of their hearings in secret, not even permitting other congressmen to attend. One reason given for this is that the rooms are too small to permit the presence of outsiders.

The Appropriations Committees tend to hold the bills determining the budget until late in a congressional session, and then rush them through. This provides committee members with leverage for as long as possible over the managers of federal programs who need their funds, and gives other members of Congress, and outsiders, little opportunity to affect the way in which the federal treasure is parceled out.

Other congressional arrangements affect the nature of our national life. Lawmakers may have a personal financial stake in the matters on which they are passing laws. According to *Congressional Quarterly*, 101 House members have reported that they have holdings in banks and other financial institutions (7 of these are on the Banking and Currency Committee, and 6 on Ways and Means); 11 have reported interests in airlines; 59 in companies dealing substantially in defense contracts (2 of these serve on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee); 54 in oil or gas companies; 14 in pharmaceuticals; 25 in power and light companies; 20 in radio and television; 9 in railroads; 19 in farms, ranches, or timberland; 16 in real estate. Fifty-eight House members reported that they received income from the practice of law; this practice offers a way to earn a lawmaker's gratitude by placing business with his firm. The practice of law by legislators violates the American Bar Association Code. More is known about House members' outside sources of income than about those of senators, who do not require themselves to make such information public.

There are the obligations which lawmakers incur to their campaign contributors. Many of the politicians object to the recently enacted campaign finance reform law, which requires that they reveal the names of

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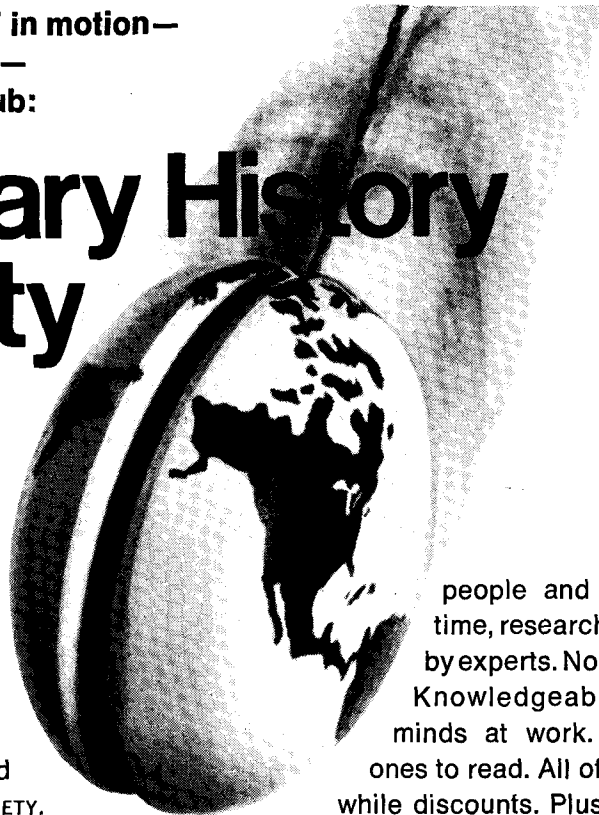
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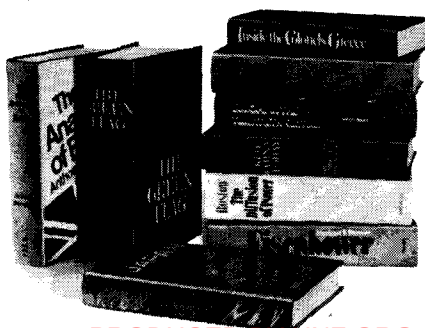
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their contributors. On their behalf, Wayne Hays, chairman of the House Administration Committee, has initiated moves to make the law more difficult to enforce.

"The members don't like disclosure," said a congressman. "In large ways and small, this place is corrupted." He told me a story to illustrate the point. The franking privilege, by which congressmen use the U.S. mail service without paying for it, was first given to the lawmakers for work in connection with services for their constituents—checking out a complaint about social security, and so on. Over time, the congressmen have adopted it as a privilege to be used at will—for the sending of newsletters and Christmas cards and pictures of the family, for mailing campaign material to their constituents just before elections. This has given incumbents an important advantage over election challengers, one for which we all pay the bill. Not long ago, one member of the House suggested to some of his colleagues that they adopt standards governing the use of the franking privilege. They were amazed and even angered. "We've had enough reform around here," said House Majority Whip Hale Boggs. "The members wouldn't like it." And that was the end of the matter.

All of this has given rise to a view, particularly prevalent in Washington, that the Congress cannot essentially change, that its workings are too complex and ingrown, that its voodoo is beyond the ken of outsiders. There is even a certain affection for its quaint ways and outrageous characters. Yet history shows that the Congress is indeed subject to change. Only sixty years ago, senators were chosen by state legislatures. (The senators from Kansas were known as "the Senator from Santa Fe" and "the Senator from Union Pacific.")

Several reforms have been adopted in recent years, and many more are being considered. There are proposals to reduce the power of committee chairmen, to spread the power to junior lawmakers, to wrest from the House Ways and Means Committee Democrats their right to make committee appointments, to give more authority to party caucuses. The state of Florida has adopted a "sunshine" law which requires that all official meetings in which public business is

transacted be open to the public; perhaps there could be a national sunshine law. Federal financing of political campaigns would be the best way of enabling lawmakers who would like to be honest, and unobligated to the interests, to be so. At the instigation of Common Cause, the Democratic Party platform this year calls for the abolition of the seniority system, the end of the closed rule in the House, the opening of all congressional committee meetings and party caucuses and the recording of all votes, public financing of elections, stricter laws on conflict of interest, prohibition of the practice of law by lawmakers, and more disclosure of lobbying activities. It is considered sophisticated to say that platform pledges are made to be broken, but perhaps that, like so much else, is changing.

The Congress is not isolated from the growing feeling in the country that things are not as they should be. People, moreover, are getting wiser about how to press for change. Whatever the results of this year's presidential election, some fundamental changes will have occurred in our political system.

There is now a very large group of people who know about political organizing: about canvassing and registering and getting out the vote. The eighteen-year-old vote, coupled with intensified participation by those seeking reform, is going to have a profound effect on our politics, one that will grow each election year, as a greater proportion of the electorate is young.

The power of numbers is going to begin to rival the power of money in politics. Incumbents will have more cause for unease. They will find their constituencies changed. The successful primary challenges this year to such senior lawmakers as Senator B. Everett Jordan of North Carolina and Representatives Emanuel Celler of New York and George Miller of California, and the almost successful challenges to Senator John McClellan of Arkansas and Representative John Rooney of New York are only the beginning. If the Congress does not respond by changing the rules of what has become its private ball game, it is going to discover that others have moved the park.

—ELIZABETH DREW

MOSCOW

There is something almost inherently deceptive about successful East-West summitry. For Americans, with their penchant for instant understanding, seem already to have digested the Moscow summit, figured it into the calculus of the presidential campaign, and begun to yield once again to the comfortable assumptions of convergence.

It is only natural that after hearing intimate vignettes about the easy banter in the Kremlin between President Nixon and Secretary Brezhnev or absorbing the warmly advertised agreements to curb the arms race, to link up in space, and to collaborate in attacking cancer, heart disease, and threats to the environment, some Americans should be tempted to presume that the two superpowers are really becoming more and more alike. Their nuclear standoff, their huge economies, their modern technology and organization impel them along convergent tracks—so the reasoning goes.

And this would not be the first warm breeze between Washington and Moscow to bring balmy expectations of liberation—a real opening up of American-Soviet contacts, a significantly improved image of America in Russia, a relaxation of Soviet ideological controls; in short, a more fundamentally normal relationship between us. Such expectations rose for periods in the 1950s and 1960s after less momentous occasions.

Yet however impressive the agreement reached and significant the new relationship struck by Nixon and Brezhnev, the summit failed to yield the kind of tangible impact on Soviet life that justifies regarding it as a milestone for real convergence.

There has been no quickening of contacts with Americans, not even a noticeable improvement in the conduct of business among middle officialdom, no hint of anything akin to what President Nixon has in mind when he talks about a free exchange of ideas. Evidently, it will take more than a summit to end the jamming of Voice of America. Nor has there been any sign of political liberalization at home; indeed, just the opposite, a tightening up has been under way.

Soviet attitudes toward the United



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States, long a schizophrenic mixture of admiration, envy, resentment, and outright enmity, seem surprisingly unaffected. The young still hunger after jeans and rock music, and they worship American technology. Older intellectuals admire more serious art and literature, though some, with a well-bred preference for older centers like Paris, ridicule American culture and taste as trashy. Others, often politically orthodox, shudder at reports of American crime, drug addiction, unemployment, shady business practices, or racial problems, and see nothing to counterbalance such ills. Typically, what to Americans seems a reasonable request for long overdue Soviet repayment of post-World War II civilian lend-lease is resented in Moscow. "America is a Shylock demanding a pound of flesh for cans of *tyshenka* [Spam]," one Soviet insider complained.

Insulation

Ordinary Russians are glad, of course, that Nixon came, and relieved—especially after his visit to Peking, which unnerved them—that the White House and the Kremlin are proclaiming peaceful coexistence. Many offer the comment that they saw the President on Soviet TV. Yet despite the ballyhoo abroad over the first visit of an American chief of state to the Soviet capital, its impact seems to have been remarkably shallow. The favorable impression created by Mr. Nixon's TV address, for example, was only skin-deep. Intellectuals, not to mention the man in the street, have only the vaguest comprehension of what actually took place in Moscow in late May. For the Soviet leadership has so far mastered the technique of preventing warmth at the summit from melting glacial coolness below. Under the pressures of nuclear stalemate and rivalry with China, the Kremlin has devised a method for combining political accommodation with insulating its own body politic from alien ideological viruses.

For Russians, the prologue to the Moscow talks was vastly different than for Americans. No Soviet citizen outside a narrow slice of the political elite had been given any reason to expect important accords to be signed

on limiting the arms race. The acronymic stepchildren of the nuclear balance of terror—SALT, ICBM, MIRV, and ABM—never had a chance to become household words here because they have rarely ever been mentioned in public. Soviet publications deigned to report the SALT talks only a few times over the past two and a half years, and then only in the bland and unrevealing arrival-and-departure statements of chief negotiators. Aside from displays of rocketry in the May Day parades, weaponry for most Russians still exists largely at the World War II level of tanks, planes, artillery, and cruisers.

So much in the dark is everyone but those at the pinnacle of power that one thoroughly trusted and thoroughly politicized Soviet journalist lost a bottle of cognac to a foreign friend by betting there would be—and could be—no major arms agreement until the Vietnam War was settled. And this was before the Haiphong crisis.

Here again, the picture given ordinary Soviets was vastly different from the one Americans had. In Washington, the sense of confrontation over the mining of Haiphong harbor was palpable. The world press blossomed quickly with comparisons to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 and speculation about Soviet minesweepers sailing to lift the mine blockade. Democratic politicians belabored Nixon for risky brinkmanship, and the White House seemed to encourage the interpretation that it wanted to force a showdown with Moscow.

Given that view of the world, intelligent Soviets would undoubtedly have found it hard to understand how their government could endure such a challenge and go through the visit at the price of disagreement with allies in Hanoi. But because the Kremlin chose to slide around Nixon's challenge rather than meet it head on, Russians were spared any sense of alarm. For twenty days before, during, and after the summit, the Soviet press did not mention the mining. Moreover, it entirely ignored the return from Moscow—during the summit talks—of a plane carrying two dead and twenty-three wounded Soviet seamen back from North Vietnam, casualties of American air raids against port areas.

The result, not surprisingly, was

that ordinary Russians took the press denunciations of American air raids on the North as routine and knew too little of the new situation to share the real frustration of the Soviet elite—just as the public now seems to know too little to share the leadership's sense of triumph after the summit.

"Your luck"

In funny little ways the great gulf between the attitudes of the leaders and the led emerge. On the night of President Nixon's arrival, a ranking Soviet journalist was asked by an American to explain why Leonid Brezhnev, the party leader, had not come to the airport to greet the American Chief Executive.

"What do you think?" he sputtered in genuine anger. "Vietnam! People here are furious about what Nixon is doing there. We have received hundreds of letters attacking him and not one in his favor." Suddenly, determined to prove his point, he stopped a startled pedestrian.

"Excuse me, we are correspondents taking opinions," he explained in Russian to a young man in shirt-sleeves whom he had nearly pinned against a building. "Tell us what you think of President Nixon's coming here."

Puzzled and obviously pained by the forceful intrusion, the young fellow hesitated. Then, prodded for an answer by the Soviet correspondent, he responded meekly: "I am glad Nixon is here."

"What do you think of America?" the Soviet newsman demanded.

Again a pause. Finally, with uncertainty, he said, "I like it very much," and sensing a chance to escape, he fled down the sidewalk while the Soviet correspondent wheeled on the American. "Your luck," he said. "That's one in a hundred."

The visit itself, of course, was a closed affair—no comparison with Nikita S. Khrushchev's lusty exposure to the American people in 1959, which was the summit visit Mr. Nixon was returning. No incident on this visit even remotely matched Khrushchev's rambling press conference in the cornfields at Coon Rapids, Iowa; his debate with American labor leaders; his famous boast to wealthy executives that Communism would one day bury capitalism.

The American President was elabo-

ately shielded from the Russian people. He emerged from his Kremlin talks and official receptions to lay wreaths at gravesides, carefully sealed off by so many rings of security men that American reporters were sometimes unable to get near him, let alone ordinary Russians.

The gap between American and Soviet political styles was never better illustrated than on the day of his arrival. American newspapers printed an advance map of the route that Mr. Nixon's motorcade would follow, but no route was shown in the Soviet press. Even the timing was undisclosed except to those discerning enough to read the real meaning of an item labeled "international program" in the daily TV diary.

Thousands profited from that little tip, but even so, numberless others miscalculated. One crowd of about two thousand were still standing, eight rows deep, at Manezh Square not far from the Kremlin fully half an hour after the President had been delivered inside the fortress by a motorcade that had used another approach to the Kremlin.

"Why are you waiting?" a visitor asked.

"To see," replied a slender student with a briefcase.

"Why not wait at the other end of the Kremlin where he was supposed to go?"

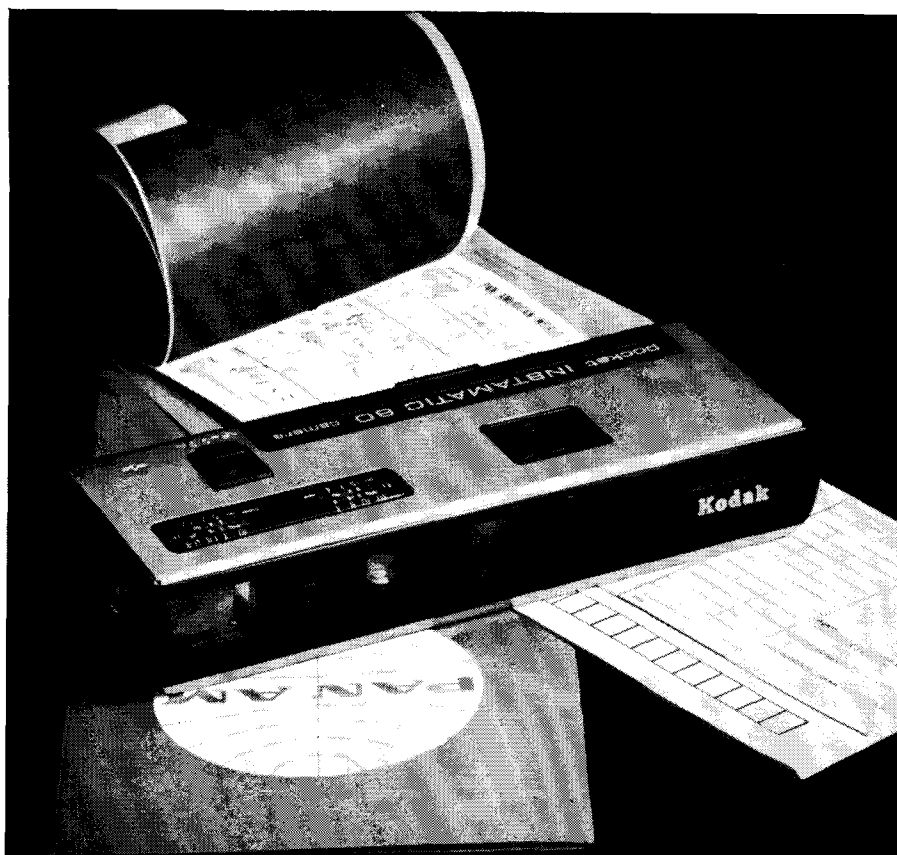
"Because this is better—a better view," the young man insisted, unknowing because Authority had not deigned to inform him.

"But Nixon has already gone into the Kremlin—at the other end," the visitor explained. "It's all over."

"Oh," said the young man, still frozen to his spot.

Delicacies

While the President was closeted in the Kremlin and Soviet newsmen and officials were charming the American press over caviar and vodka, the telephones of such well-known dissident Soviet liberals as physicists Andrei Sakharov and Valery Chalidze and historian Roy Medvedev were disconnected for the duration of the visit. Jewish activists were either called up for military duty or simply arrested and kept in detention until after his departure to insure that there would be no untoward demonstrations.



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MOSCOW

On the day President Nixon left Moscow, after his widely viewed television address to the Russian people and several televised signing ceremonies in the Kremlin, shoppers were literally locked in stores or research institutes along Leninsky Prospekt while his motorcade made its way to the airport. The Soviet explanation was that security required this. But more than one American official suspected that the leadership did not want ordinary Soviets paying too warm a tribute to an American chief of state.

The Kremlin has handled the post-summit period with even greater delicacy, given the dilemma posed by the results. To defend its accommodation with an American President condemned in Hanoi and privately by some Soviet hardliners, the Kremlin has unleashed a great fanfare in the press hailing the triumphs of the summit. But, in fact, little has been disclosed, because if the arms agreements alone were fully spelled out, they would have broad implications for the structure of Soviet society and the whole process of maintaining political conformity through a sense of siege.

As it is, the mood of détente with America has awakened vague hopes among ordinary Russians that trade with the United States will grow, that more Americans will visit here, that perhaps more Russians will be allowed to go West, and that curbing the arms race will pay dividends for Soviet consumers. But there has been no parallel to the American congressional debate on the arms pacts, carrying the process of public education further. The uninitiated have been left to glean the meaning from the bare texts of the agreements printed in *Pravda*. And even Soviet intellectuals do not consider it strange that they should take these new pacts on faith, leaving it to the military to be sure that they are carried out.

"People don't understand those documents," said one well-read, well-traveled linguist. "They simply understand that agreements were signed, and they hope this will mean less will be spent on arms and more for a better life for the people. They are happy that peace seems more secure. But they feel the details are for

the armed forces to worry about."

For the few with the wit and patience to study the fine print, it has come as a shock to learn that behind the screen of continuing ideological struggle with America, the Soviet leadership has consented not to interfere with American spy satellites, not to erect effective missile defenses, and even to agree with Washington where to locate those it does construct.

The protocol giving the precise numbers of submarine-based missiles permitted for each side has been withheld from the Soviet public. So has the flood of information available in America on the size of respective arsenals.

One liberal intellectual, who learned about all this from foreign sources, declared that this information would have explosive impact here. If it became known that the Kremlin and the White House were sharing that kind of information, he said, it would be increasingly difficult to make Soviet chemists, biologists, geologists, and other scientists and intellectuals submit to elaborate censorship controls on their own more modest academic findings. If the Kremlin shares such vital information with its main ideological enemy, he reasoned, what pretext is there for secrecy at home?

His reaction and that of others to the news that the Soviet Union was being allowed more missiles than the United States exposed another awkward problem for the Kremlin. "We must be getting the extra missiles for China," he said.

Beware

The financial implications of the arms agreements have also been withheld from the public here. The Soviet press has been careful not to encourage public expectations of a better deal for consumers, even though that may have been one of the Kremlin's motivations in the first place. The press has ignored Defense Secretary Melvin R. Laird's statements that the pact will save the United States \$5 billion in defense expenditures over the next five years. Instead, it has reported regularly his demands for new strategic spending.

In its effort to command support among the faithful for the summit, the Kremlin has attached a string of

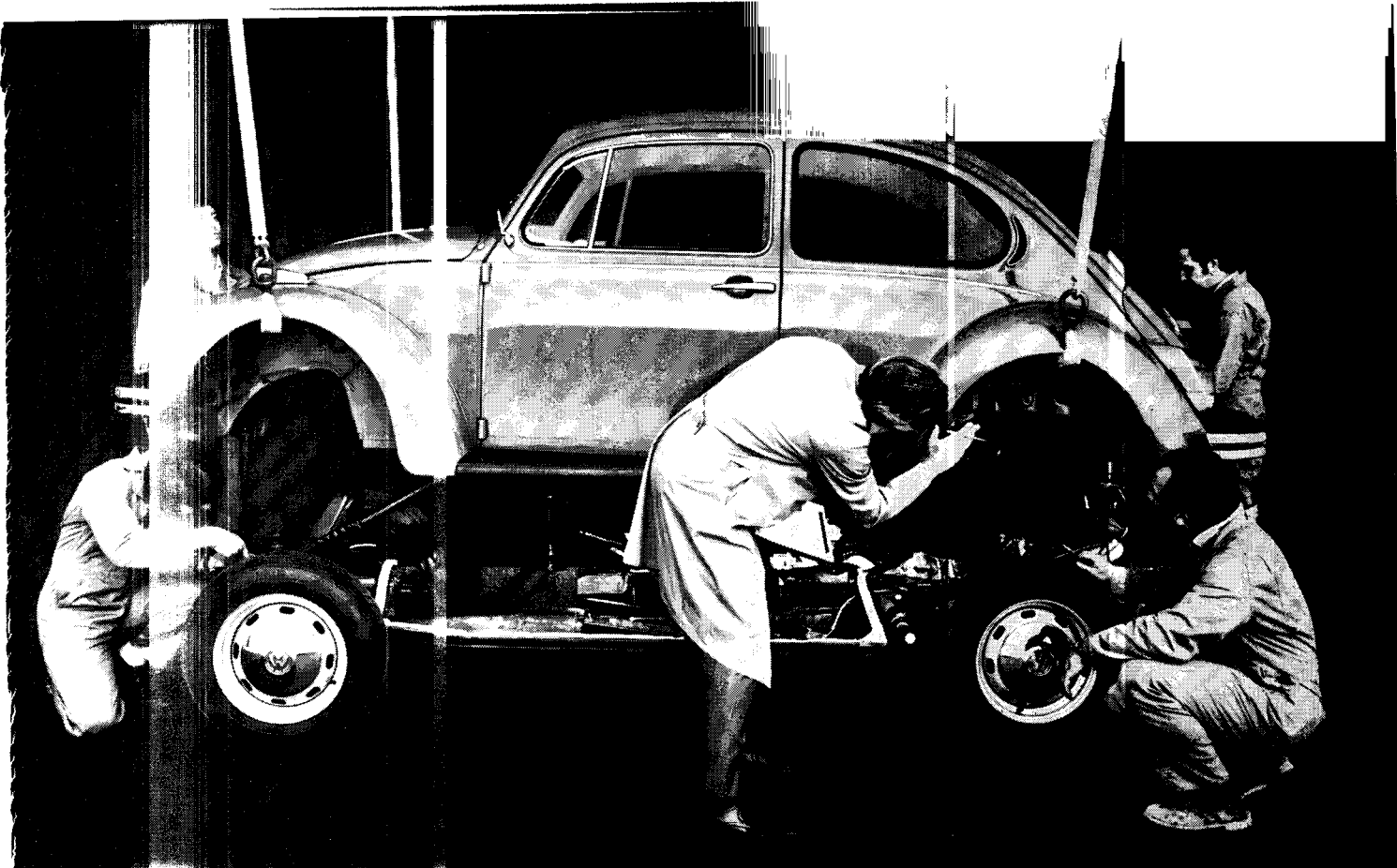
generalized superlatives to the results. One expert on Soviet-American relations, Georgy Arbatov, told a national television audience that the results were of paramount importance, comparable to American recognition of the Soviet regime in 1933 or American-Soviet wartime partnership.

But no similar sense of camaraderie has followed. Moscow may be in the market for American grain, but it bars the American Embassy's agricultural attaché from a trip through farm areas open to other foreign travelers. The American Navy takes Soviet naval officers in Washington on a two-week tour of American naval installations, but American officers here are lucky to get a day in a Soviet military academy in landlocked Moscow.

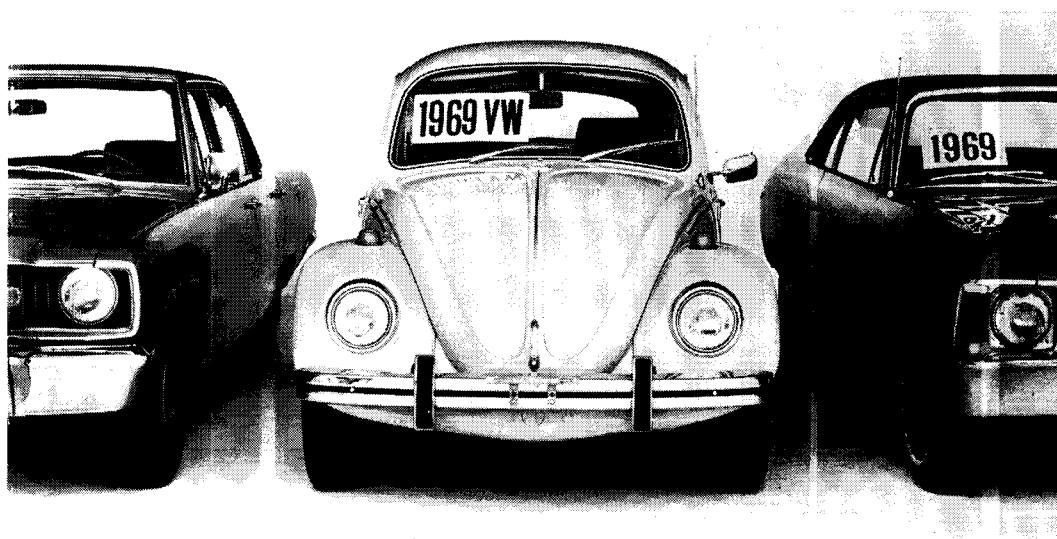
Even where people want better relations, old habits and reflexes persist. A Foreign Ministry official told one American journalist after the summit that the word was out to be nicer to Americans, but within minutes he was complaining to the same reporter about his dispatches. The arms agreement may have committed both sides to open skies, but when an American newsman tried to take photographs of a new Soviet gasoline station, the manager stopped him and reported the incident to the police.

Nor has Brezhnev's entertainment of President Nixon at his country dacha produced parallel hospitality at lower levels. In the season of salesmanship that prevailed during the summit, more than one Soviet journalist invited American acquaintances to renew old social contacts that had withered under restrictions here. But after the summit season passed, engagements were broken and all but the selected few Soviets with special clearances or with a devil-may-care attitude became wary once again about seeing Americans. Even Soviet students have been called in recently by police and told not to mix with resident Americans here. And clearly there is nothing comparable in this country to the stream of Soviet officials and editors who travel widely across the United States lecturing to American universities and civic groups.

Domestically, the controls here seem a bit tighter this summer than before. Bulat Okudzhava, a writer and guitarist, has been purged from the Communist Party for refusing to



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If you saw the way we put a Volkswagen together, you might think we were building a time capsule instead of a car that sells for only \$ 999.*

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MOSCOW

disavow the publication abroad by Russian émigré organizations of some of his politically daring songs. Pyotr Yakir, a bearded father figure in the dissident movement and a particularly outspoken anti-Stalinist, has been arrested and charged with anti-Soviet activities in what is taken to be a determined police campaign to snuff out liberal underground publications and to cripple the dissident movement generally. Other arrests and interrogations are being reported in Kiev, Leningrad, Novosibirsk, and Kharkov. A major political trial is evidently in preparation against nationalist-minded intellectuals in the Ukraine, including Vyacheslav Chornovil, Ivan Svitlichny, Yevgen Sverstiuk, and Ivan Dzyuba.

Such developments prompted Andrei Sakharov, the physicist whose statement on human rights in 1968 stirred excitement and hopes for Soviet liberalization, to lament what he called the increasing repression in the Soviet Union over the past fifteen months. The picture he presented was

one of a split-level society: a privileged ruling stratum "tenaciously clinging to their public and secret privileges," and all other people, deprived of the right to travel, access to information, and freedom from "totalitarian interference of the state in citizens' lives through dismissals from jobs and training institutes, refusal of residence permits, and restrictions on professional promotion" for refusing to go along with officialdom.

Feeling no pain

None of this means, of course, that the tone and temperament of relations between the White House and the Kremlin have not undergone a fundamental transformation for the better and that the Soviet leadership will not continue to woo President Nixon.

In an increasingly complex world in which China, Japan, and Europe will play large and still uncertain roles, the Kremlin feels much more comfortable now that it has won the Nixon Administration's formal acceptance of global parity with the Soviet Union and has rekindled Washing-

ton's interest in superpower diplomacy.

For the sake of parity and bipolarity, Brezhnev was prepared to override objections within the Soviet Politburo as well as risk serious frictions with Hanoi. It is now apparent that he refused to be pressured by North Vietnam to try to crash through the American blockade of North Vietnamese ports, or by hardliners at home, like Pyotr Y. Shelest, the former Ukrainian Party boss now demoted to a deputy premiership, to postpone or cancel the summit talks with President Nixon.

"As a personality Nixon fascinates the Soviets, but he worries them," explains one senior European diplomat. "They find him unpredictable. And with their five-year plans and all those other plans, they like to be able to look ahead and know where they are going. With Nixon, they can never be sure, and this makes them uneasy. Now, after the summit, they think they can be more sure of him."

Soviet officials put it another way. They sense an American retrenchment in the world that is working to Moscow's advantage. They see an accumulation of pressures on the United States posed by the Vietnam War, increasing economic competition from Western Europe and Japan, and domestic social and economic dislocations. All this, they feel, has made Washington more willing to accept Moscow on an equal footing.

On a personal level, Brezhnev has profited greatly from the simultaneous achievement of strategic equality with Washington and West German acceptance of the Soviet sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. So deftly has he identified himself as the patron of the new climate of détente that some liberal intellectuals who were privately chastizing him four years ago because of the Czechoslovakia intervention now suggest that the only hope of any liberalization at home or for more open contacts with the West rests on Brezhnev's accumulation of still further power.

"We need a strong dictator," explained one liberal-minded writer with scant concern for notions of convergence between the Soviets and Americans, "to overcome the orthodoxy of the Party apparatus."

—HEDRICK SMITH

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CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND, INC.
CALCUTTA, INDIA - CASEWORKER REPORT

TO NAZARETH HOME, CALCUTTA

DATE: MARCH 17, 1969

NAME: ELIZABETH DASS

DATE OF BIRTH: APRIL 12, 1964

NATIVE PLACE: CALCUTTA

ORDER OF BIRTH: THIRD DAUGHTER

HEALTH: FRAIL, THIN, WALKS WITH
DIFFICULTY. PROTEIN DEPRIVED

CHARACTERISTICS: GENTLE, QUIET, COOPERATIVE. SPEAKS CLEARLY AND IS
OF GOOD MIND. WILL BE ABLE TO LEARN ONCE HEALTH
AND STRENGTH ARE RESTORED.

PARENTS CONDITION: FATHER: DECEASED,

MOTHER: MALNOURISHED, RECENT VICTIM OF
SMALLPOX, WORKS IN A MATCH
FACTORY.

INVESTIGATION REPORT:

ELIZABETH'S FATHER USED TO BE A STREET CLEARNER, DIED FROM TYPHUS. HER
MOTHER IS VERY WEAK FROM HER RECENT ILLNESS-INDIVIDUALLY SHE IS REMARKABLE SHE
IS ALIVE AT ALL. ONLY WORK AVAILABLE TO THIS WOMAN IS IN A MATCH
FACTORY WHERE SHE EARNED TWO RUPEES A DAY (20¢) WHEN SHE IS STRONG ENOUGH
TO GET THERE AND WORK.

HOME CONDITIONS: HOUSE: ONE ROOM BUSTEE (HOVEL) OCCUPIED BY SEVERAL
OTHER PERSONS BESIDES ELIZABETH AND HER MOTHER.
HOUSE IS SO SMALL COOKING IS DONE ON THE
FOOTPATH. BATHING IS DONE AT A PUBLIC TAP DOWN
THE ROAD. PERSONS LIVING WITH THEM IN THIS
HOUSE ARE NOT OF GOOD REPUTE, AND THE MOTHER
FEARS FOR ELIZABETH.

SISTERS:

MARIA DASS, DECEASED OF SMALLPOX
LORRAINE DASS, ALSO DECEASED OF SMALLPOX
(ELIZABETH FORTUNATELY ENTIRELY ESCAPED CONTAGION)

REMARKS:

ELIZABETH WILL CERTAINLY BECOME ILL, PERHAPS WILL TAKE UP
THIEVING, MAYBE EVEN MORE TERRIBLE WAYS OF LIVING, IF
SHE IS NOT REMOVED FROM HER PRESENT HOME CONDITIONS. HER
MOTHER IS WILLING FOR HER TO GO TO NAZARETH HOME AND WEEPS
WITH JOY AT THE HOPE OF HER LITTLE DAUGHTER BECOMING
SAFE FROM THE WRETCHED LIFE THEY NOW HAVE.

STRONGEST RECOMMENDATION THAT ELIZABETH DASS BE ADMITTED
AT ONCE.



Elizabeth Dass was admitted to the Nazareth Home a few days after we received this report and she is doing better now. Her legs are stronger . . . she can walk and sometimes even run with the other children. She is beginning to read and can already write her name.

Every day desperate reports like the one above reach our overseas field offices. Then we must make the heartbreaking decision—which child can we help? Could you turn away a child like Elizabeth and still sleep at night?

For only \$12 a month you can sponsor a needy little boy or girl from the country of your choice, or you can let us select a child for you from our emergency list.

Then in about two weeks, you will receive a photograph of your child, along with a personal history, and information about the project where your child receives help. Your child will write to you, and you will receive the original plus an English translation—direct from an overseas office.

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CHRISTIAN CHILDREN'S FUND, Inc.

Box 26511, Richmond, Va. 23261

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(Country) _____

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Send me child's name, story, address and picture.

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☐ Please send me more information

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Innocent Bystander



Edmund Wilson
by L. E. Sissman

Time after time, in the twenty-eight years I've been reading Edmund Wilson, since I first discovered his criticism in the *New Yorker* in the fall of 1944, I've been tempted to write him a fan letter; several times, moved by the lucency and prescience of one of his judgments, I've started such a letter; always I've been forestalled by the seeming impudence of the gesture, given Wilson's magisterial eminence; and now it's too late.

Too late, anyway—though I confess I thought of it on hearing of his death—to apostrophize him posthumously with a public version of my letter in these pages. But not too late, perhaps, to memorialize him by making a point or two about his stance and scope that have been missed, so far at least, by his many eulogists.

It is taken as read—and I concur—that Edmund Wilson was the greatest of our critics of this century, and among the three or four greatest—along with T. S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, and F. Scott Fitzgerald—of our literary men. He has been widely and rightly praised for his long and almost obsessive study of many literatures, including, of course, our own, and for his ability to make enlightening connections between them; for his unsparing spirit of inquiry and the discoveries it led to; and for his destruction of the literary isolationism of this continent. It is not too much to say that he, almost single-handedly, replaced the dim, effete domestic idols of the late genteel tradition with the real giants of modern European literature.

What enabled him to do all this? That point hasn't really been discussed. And it deserves to be, because

Wilson is not only a towering figure but also a unique one; nobody, before or since, has possessed quite his quality of, to coin a phrase, involved detachment, quite his ability to render an objective judgment in an issue with which he was concerned as a partisan, quite his talent for lively—even popular—exposition of the most abstruse and arcane subjects.

I think several elements in his character and training made these achievements possible. First, he was a born showman and didact, as his early infatuation with magic suggests; though he was not a public performer on the lecture platform, he must have had a powerful predilection for dazzling and edifying the public through his writings. Second, he was never an academic; he did not wall up his light or circumscribe his experience by retreating into a university. Instead, he remained very much in the world and of it, and his ferocious erudition was tempered and broadened by a continuing acquaintance with all sorts and conditions of men—and an appetite, on the scale of John Dos Passos', for life. Third, as kind of a corollary, his own drive for distinction (and perhaps his educative bent) led him to publish at length in popular journals—the *New Republic* and the *New Yorker* in particular—which would assure him a fairly sizable, though mainly nonacademic, audience. Finally, one condition of publication in magazines like these is the possession of a clear, cogent, untechnical style, free of the jargon of academic criticism; this Wilson developed early.

We have now connected the dots of the puzzle, so to speak, to make an outline portrait of a man who must be virtually *sui generis*: a distinguished scholar—though one who owed allegiance to no established school of criticism—who was also a practicing literary journalist of the first rank (indeed, he was alone in that rank). This remarkable duality of solitariness and popularity must have accounted both for Wilson's remarkable independence of judgment and for the irresistible readability of even his most casual essays. (As evidence of the latter, let me adduce a recent example. I had just begun to read a book I'd been looking forward to with some eagerness, when I decided to glance again at Wilson's *The Bit Between My Teeth* in preparation for this article. So mesmeric was the im-

pact of these critical essays, written between seven and twenty-two years ago, that I found myself rereading the book *in toto* without a thought for the neglected new volume, which deals with the pressing issues of the 1972 elections.)

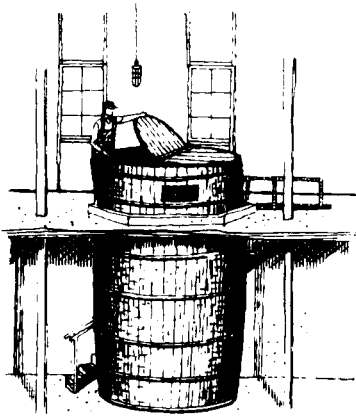
I turn often to Wilson's collections of critical essays, to his incomplete memoirs, of which *A Prelude* seems the most satisfying, and to his political writings; less often to his flawed and idiosyncratic fiction and his decidedly quirky poetry. But one book I find myself rereading more often than any other of his twenty-odd titles is one that sheds a quite different light on its author and his times, *The American Earthquake*. It is composed of pieces of what the author calls "simple reporting," written between 1923 and 1934 and collected in 1958, and it is quite the best book about that period in America I have ever read. Looking back, it is hard to imagine the Jeffersonian aristocrat Wilson moving among people of all classes, conditions, and regions of the country as a humble reporter; but that is exactly what he did, and with results so telling and moving that they prefigure—and perhaps enable—the later work of a number of lesser writers who have reported firsthand on the situation of ordinary Americans.

The American Earthquake, for all the casualness of its compilation, has a strong and cogent scheme: in the first section, called "The Follies," Wilson deals with the excesses of the Boom; in the second, "The Earthquake," with the consequences of the Crash; in the third, "Dawn of the New Deal," with the painful beginnings of the slow climb back. The first section is all skewed sunshine and driving energy—vignettes of apartment-hunting in New York, Texas Guinan's nightclub, the finale at the Follies, the circus, brownstones coming down and skyscrapers thrusting up, a Princeton reunion, the Gray-Snyder case, and such touching notes on style as this:

In the billiard parlors of Waterbury and Scranton, young men are wearing the blue shirts and the white-rimmed gray hats of the Prince of Wales; and in the back streets of Newark and Schenectady, little girls in the green hats of Michael Arlen are dancing the Charleston on the pavement.



RIGHT HERE, IN THIS VAT of hard maple charcoal, is where Jack Daniel's becomes a smooth, sippin' Tennessee Whiskey.



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The Curious Legend of La Dame Blanche

Long, long ago, in the Bordeaux region of France, there lived a handsome young Count.

The estate on which he lived had a truly remarkable vineyard, from which came one of the finest wines in all of France. This wine was treasured throughout the land and was a source of great pride to the young aristocrat.

The people all loved him, for he was very good to them, and the fine wine he produced brought prosperity to them all.

However, they were concerned about one thing.

He had not yet found a wife.

One day, the Count decided to take a holiday, and he journeyed to Morocco. There he met a beautiful Moorish princess with dark mysterious eyes and black silken hair.

And skin the color of dark topaz.

She was, he thought, the most beautiful woman he had ever seen, and he fell hopelessly in love with her. And she with him. And so they were married.

When the news of the beloved Count's

marriage to a dark-skinned woman reached the people, they were dismayed. And when he brought her home, they turned their backs on her. Why couldn't he have married one of his own kind?

Despite this, the pair lived happily together until the Count died. Then, his loving wife did something that shocked everyone.

She came to the funeral dressed in white...the color of mourning of her native land.

No one in France had ever worn anything but black for mourning. Oh, she had strange ways, this dark foreign woman.

The bereaved Countess wore nothing but white for the rest of her life, for she had loved her husband very much. So much so that, in his tradition, she continued caring for the vineyard. Which, in turn, continued to produce the superb wine.

She was really a very kind woman, and, like her husband, treated the people well. Slowly, they began to accept her. And they learned to love her as much as they had the Count.

Later, when she died, they all came to her funeral to honor her.

And they came dressed in white.

Now, here is the curious part of the story.

Ever since the death of the Countess, on certain mornings at dawn, a strange white mist drifts across the meadow and surrounds the Chateau.

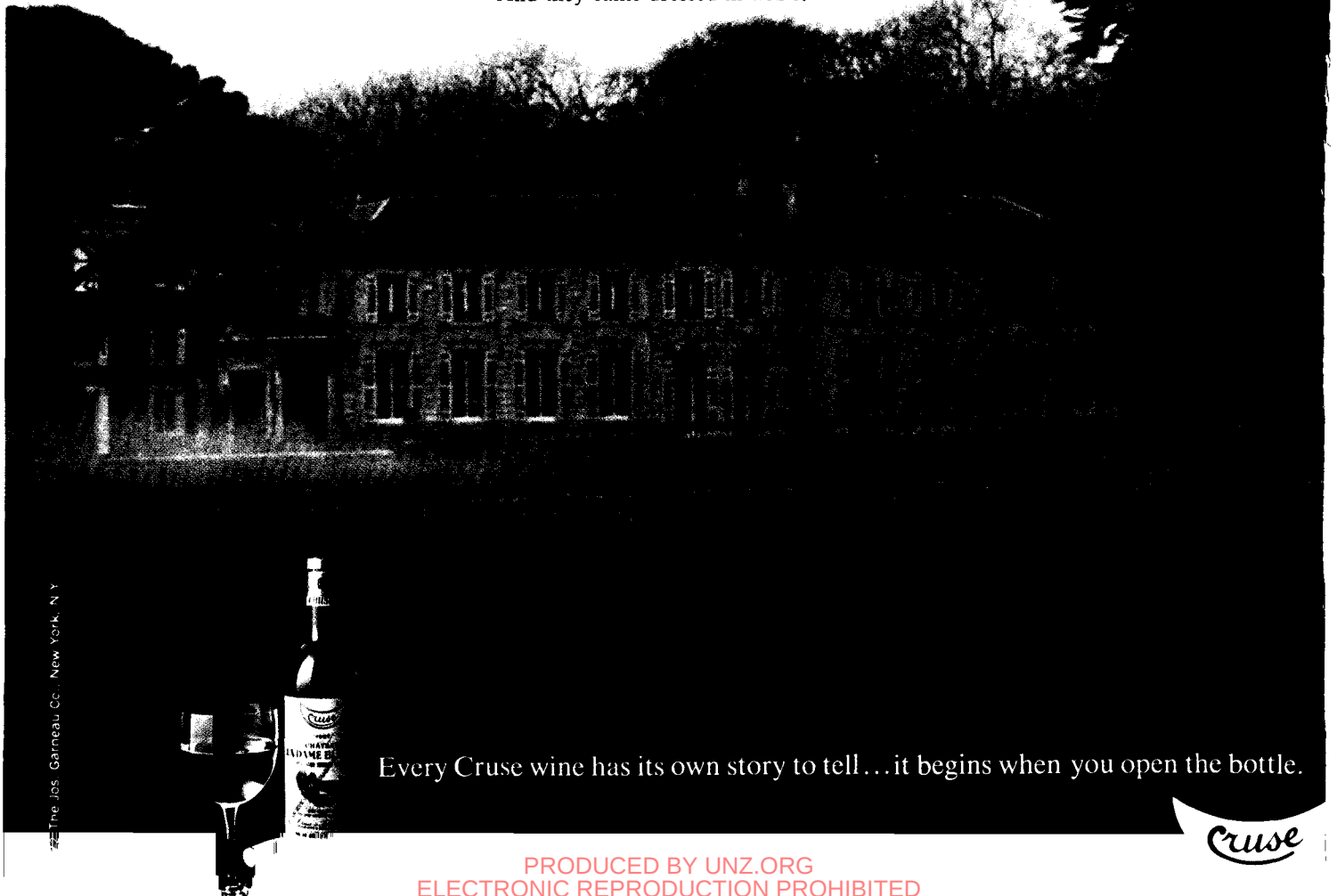
And the people seeing this phenomenon, say, "La Dame Blanche has returned". So when the white mist appears, the people are happy to be reminded that La Dame Blanche remembers them.

Today, the famous Cruse family occupies the Chateau. And their wine, now called Chateau La Dame Blanche, is still among the finest in all of France. As is every wine that bears the Cruse crescent. Each with its own special story to tell.

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BYSTANDER

In the second section, all this forced gaiety and expansion turn to something sour and sinister: we see the political headquarters in New York on election night, 1930; we watch a deputation of depositors in a failed bank wait on Mayor Jimmy Walker with their demands for restitution; we visit Detroit to talk to the unemployed; we tour rural Kentucky with a Red Cross worker and a county agent; we investigate a rash of suicides in Brooklyn; we are present at the grand opening of the Empire State Building; we interview the survivors of a mine dispute; we attend the infamous Scottsboro case; we inspect the irrelevant nonsensicality of Los Angeles and return to a textile workers' strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts. All of these reports are written with artful simplicity and directness; all of them are fresh and moving now. Two in particular—"Detroit Motors," with its sustained opening section that describes the dismantling and resmelting of junk cars at River Rouge with the cumulative force of some *ballet mécanique*, and "The City of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels," which uses the outrageous wordplays of a Joyce to describe the indescribable—qualify as distinguished literary experiments as well. A few of these outrageous words from the Los Angeles piece—which does for Los Angeles architecture what S. J. Perelman's brilliant and contemporaneous "Scenario" does for the Hollywood vulgate—will show what I mean:

The residential people of Los Angeles are cultivated enervated people, lovers of mixturesque beauty—and they like to express their emotivation in homes that imaginatively symphonize their favorite historical films. . . . Here you will find a Pekinese pagoda made of fresh and crackly peanut brittle—there a snow-white marshmallow igloo—there a toothsome pink nougat in the Florentine manner, rich with embedded pecans. There rears a pocket-size replica of heraldic Warwick Castle—and there drowns a nausey old nance.

The third section of *The American Earthquake* intensifies this juxtaposition of American banalities—short-fallen dreams like the Radio City

Music Hall and the shabby, leftover twenties pomp of the Roosevelt inaugural parade—with American realities: Hull House in 1932, the trial for fraud of the president of the National City Bank, a nasty clash between striking dairy farmers and state troopers in Oriskany, New York, and the faint hopes and floundering confusions of the first years of the New Deal. There are two more personal reports that add a further depth: Wilson's first piece (1933) on a return to the ancestral house in Talcottville, which figures so prominently in his last book, *Upstate*, and "What to Do Till the Doctor Comes," a short story about casual sex and drinking—almost as a memorial to the spirit of the twenties—in New York in 1934.

I can't think of any other book—with the partial exception of *U.S.A.*—that conveys so broadly and fully the aspirations, fears, and failures of those ten years when America thought it had come of age in the world and then discovered otherwise, as it was to discover again in the late sixties. (Some recent events are almost spookily prefigured here: in a report on the address of an American engineer, H. J. Freyn, to the Taylor Society on his experiences in the Soviet Union of the first Five-Year Plan, Wilson seems to suggest that the mass scientific management of the Russians gave rise to an American desire to emulate them, which raises the possibility that the military-industrial complex isolated by Eisenhower, and Emmet Hughes, at the end of the fifties was actually the result of competition with the Soviets dating from the thirties. Again, in a 1957 footnote to an earlier article on the New Deal, Wilson implies that "the irresistible instinct of power to expand itself" led Roosevelt to welcome and even provoke the Second World War, with the consequence that "we turned up after the war occupying or controlling foreign countries all over America, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. . . . After years of being shocked by the imperialism of others, we are developing a new kind of our own." This seven years before Vietnam became an issue.)

Thus *The American Earthquake* not only provides a detailed and emblematic picture of American life in the Boom and the Depression but also connects that past with the immediate present. In itself, the book is an en-

during achievement; above that, it is a persuasive piece of evidence that points to the chief reason for Wilson's preeminence as a critic not only of arts and letters but of politics and manners: an experience deeply rooted in a life beyond the world of books.

Wilson is dead, but, thankfully, we have much more to hear from him. Roger Straus, his publisher, recently revealed that a number of volumes of Wilson's journals are still to be edited and published in the years ahead. It is likely that they will be as engaging and pungent as his earlier books, but with a stronger element of the personal. I look forward to them with intolerable impatience.

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THE MAIL

WAR IN THE BACK SEAT

SIR: In her essay "The War in the Back Seat" (July *Atlantic*) Alix Kates Shulman seems to make the assumption that male authors who have written about the horrors of the sexual mores of the 1950s in their books (including my own novel *Going All the Way*) are somehow endorsing or even promoting the sort of psychic slaughter they have described. This is like making the assumption that Joseph Heller wrote *Catch-22* to promote the cause of aerial bombardment.

My own feeling is, as it was when I wrote the novel, that both men and women were victimized by the social-sexual standards they were trained in, raised in, and thrown into together in the socially constructed cages of those back seats. Neither the guys nor the girls invented the back seat of the automobile, nor the rules of the game as they were taught us all at the time, which said we had to grapple there in mutual fright and terror that was inflicted by a social and "moral" order that taught us from birth that our needs and desires for one another were evil and dirty.

In making the teen-age boys of the fifties the villains of her piece (and the grown-up boys who wrote about them), Mrs. Shulman simply continues the hostilities, exactly in the way we were taught to view them back in high school, seeing the other sex as the villain, rather than accusing the sick tradition which taught us to fear our own feelings for one another.

But even in the dungeonlike back-seat darkness of the fifties, things were not as black and white as Mrs. Shulman now makes them when she writes, "It was the boys who put us in those compromising positions (we never asked to be driven to those

dark streets) . . . the boys who imposed our dilemmas."

Oh, Mrs. Shulman, even the mousiest of girls was able with a twitter of disapproval to send most of us speeding her safely home, if she so desired. Did you never know the technique of "hugging the door," a code by which the girl indicated she did not wish to get close, and which was almost universally accepted as a sign to return her to her doorstep untouched?

And did you know of no girl at all who *wished* to be taken out into whatever privacy she and her boyfriend could find, and who may have even—gasp—encouraged the guy to take her to such a dark place? The first time I ever "parked," the girl told me where to go, and what to do, and how to do it, and I am eternally grateful to her.

Not all of us were always at war, even in the back seat, and it was in the condition of fellow conspirators against the outside world of parents, preachers, and the accumulated piety of our long and disastrous heritage of sexual guilt and fear that we sometimes found mutual pleasure.

Mrs. Shulman quotes a long passage from my novel in which the guys speak disparagingly of a girl who has had sex with many men, and is so scorned for it. She uses this passage to illustrate her contention that there was no way for a girl to have sex without being cast into the darkness of social disapproval. That is simply not true. Sex did not always equal shame for the girls, as other passages in my novel clearly indicate. I described the weird social hypocrisy that allowed a girl in the right clubs and sororities to have all the sex she wanted if she was "pinned" or going steady, without any shame attached to it. One of my characters, describ-

ing such a girl in such a situation, remarked: "She wasn't a slut; she was a Theta."

I should perhaps point out to Mrs. Shulman that the remark is intended to be ironic, a comment on the ridiculous and damaging way in which sex was hypocritically socialized for all of us, both male and female.

The comment is in no way intended to be either an endorsement or a criticism of the alumnae of Kappa Alpha Theta.

DAN WAKEFIELD
Boston, Mass.

SIR: I'm pleased Alix Kates Shulman believes in my innocence and sympathizes with my longings.

Nor am I in fundamental disagreement with her view of "The War in the Back Seat." My piece, from which she generously and fairly quotes, was obviously written from a male's point of view and it was not my business there to offer any speculations about what was running through the heads of our "opponents" as we attempted to "score" in those long-ago battles between the sexes.

If, in "The War in the Back Seat," the girl was literally fighting for her life, her future, she had, at least in some places, a larger variety of weapons at her command than Ms. Shulman suggests, including dominance of the adolescent society in almost every area except sports. Some of the ardor males brought to those back-seat struggles was not sexual. Metaphorically, I think some of us were trying to break down that dominance, assert sexual rights as well as a sexual privilege that was mostly illusory. On one or two occasions, I can remember struggles that were engaged in for a reason that neither Ms. Shulman nor



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I mentioned, but which really should enter this discussion. That reason, damn it all, was love. And it provoked the most ambivalent and truly frustrating of all these skirmishes. For then the fight was not over any worthwhile interpersonal issue, but as I said, over this concept of virginity. That it not be violated, compromises were arrived at that were not healthy for either the boy or the girl, that were, indeed, clinically perverse if humanly poignant.

RICHARD SCHICKEL
New York City

SIR: Alix Kates Shulman's article on the forties and fifties offered more than a woman's reflections on those years. It makes some men look back and understand why they weren't particularly enthusiastic about that period in their lives either. If it was all right to lie to a girl in order to "score," then it really wasn't such a big step to cheating on exams or handing in someone else's term paper in school. And it was perfectly acceptable among your peers, since everyone did it, and it was all part of growing up, right?

So the transitions became more and more flexible, from saying "I love you" when you didn't mean it, to falsifying body counts for your company commander's efficiency report, to misrepresenting a product you sold because the competition was doing it, and to voting for someone who was "practical" enough to deal with other politicians whom you neither trusted nor respected.

That was how most of us good ole boys were trained to operate—in linear terms, setting aside such frivolous expenditures of energy as emotion or genuine curiosity about what other people were thinking. What was ingenious about all this good instruction was that you learned how to lie to yourself. That's how you can go to marches for Peace and Brotherhood, and then return to your office, where your secretary is underpaid to do much of the work for you.

JAMES W. SHARBUTT
New York City

SIR: I am so glad that Alix Shulman made that marriage contract with her husband so that she would have time to write marvelous articles like "The War in the Back Seat."

It was so great to see the adolescent

sexual crisis portrayed from the *female's* point of view. It all rang so true, so true. Believe me, growing up female in the fifties was just like that.

CAROL PLUMB
Cambridge, Mass.

SIR: If it were within my power, I would make Alix Kates Shulman's "The War in the Back Seat" assigned reading for all men and, indeed, all women who grew up during the era of the forties and fifties. Perhaps then some of the mystery of "what women want" could be understood.

MS. EVALINE JONES
Centerville, Iowa

SIR: I'd like a deeper insight than "The War in the Back Seat" offers. I was born in 1930 and grew up in Missouri, and though I was the exception, most boys and girls were typed either before they were born, or shortly thereafter. Our real lives were in secret. Sex was the only release we had, we were all lonely, and Shulman is exactly correct, the girls had it *bad*. But the boys had it bad, too, but differently. If a nice boy (in Shulman's sense of a nice girl) was arrested for drunken driving, kicked out of school for fighting, got caught forging checks, was arrested for breaking and entering, got caught masturbating, or—things nice girls never did—had a homosexual experience, parents understood—oh yeah? Often anything but.

But Shulman is correct in that a boy could overcome a reputation whereas a girl could not (she says this by implication), and often these things nice boys did, at risk, did help form character, whereas the girls literally couldn't dare. Anyway, it was tough for all of us, and with the slick boys having reported (Roth, etc.), I'd like to hear more of the real girl story from the women.

FIELDING DAWSON
New York City

SIR: Alix Kates Shulman has (perhaps knowingly) written about one of the strongest motivations for my present feminist position as well as many other women of the generation she is writing about. She so clearly portrays the limiting, degrading role available to "nice" girls of that time. She has made it even clearer to me why I dislike intensely the whole clothes game, why I can't really stand

the notion of romantic love as defined by popular culture, how any woman who understands her own sexuality hates the double standard and all it supports, and best of all, how the narrow definition of femininity cripples *both* sexes and does not lead to real communication and understanding between them.

JUDITH B. BROWN
Montreal, Canada

SIR: It seems strange that a magazine with the high reputation of *The Atlantic* should drop its standards to the point of admitting so questionable an article as "The War in the Back Seat." It is not to be distinguished in impact from the lowest pornography obtainable on Forty-second Street in New York.

WILLIS A. BOUGHTON
Fort Lauderdale, Fla.

TOP SECRET

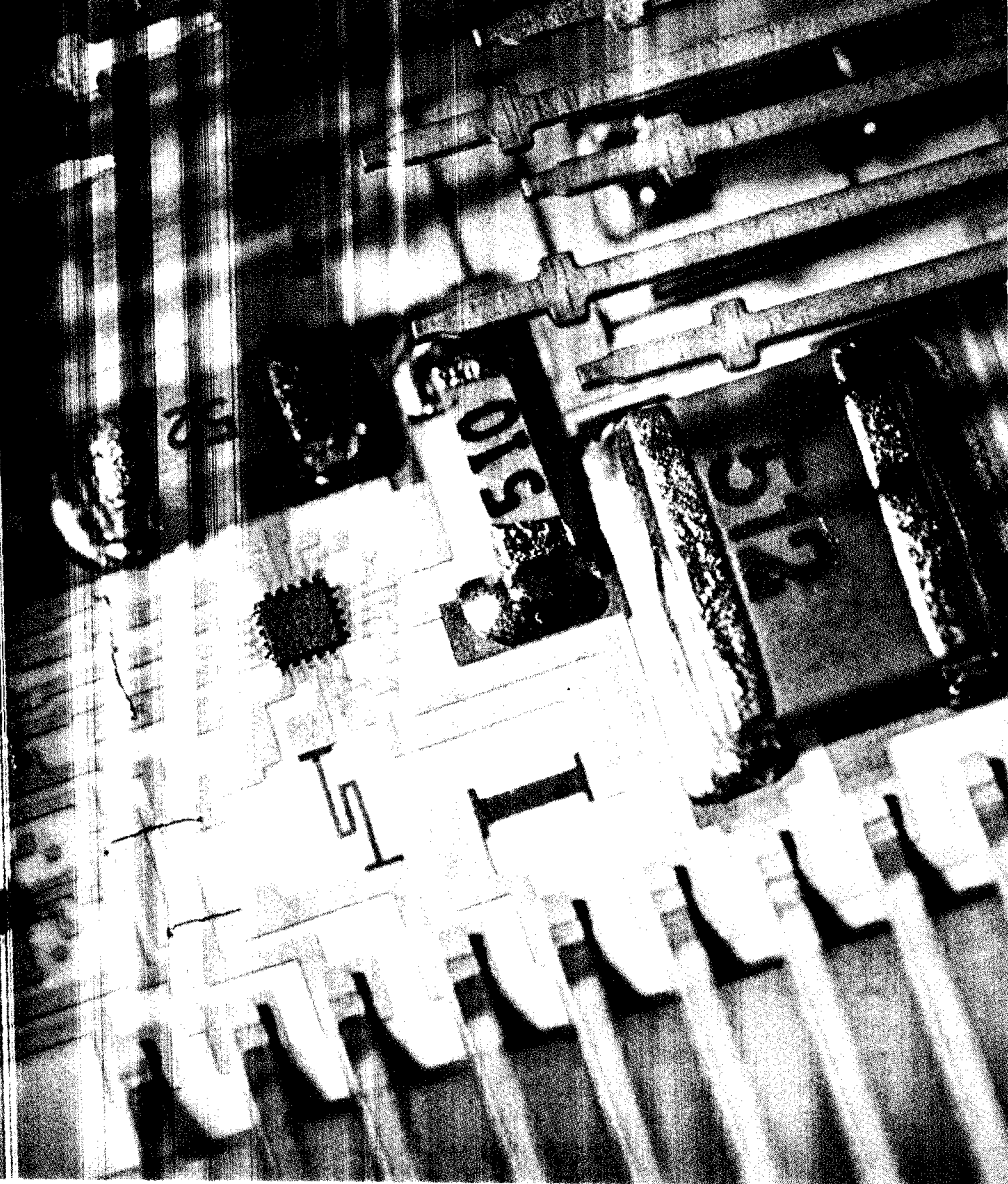
SIR: George W. Ball's memorandum (July *Atlantic*) is interesting chiefly in that it demonstrates that opposition existed within the Johnson Administration to the course which the war took. It does not demonstrate opposition to the war itself.

Mr. Ball, while rejecting the tactical direction he (apparently) saw developing, was not opposed to the strategic arguments underlying the tactics. In fact, he explicitly adopts the prowar strategic assumptions in his memorandum. At the beginning of his piece, Mr. Ball states: "The maintenance of a non-Communist South Vietnam is of considerable strategic value to the United States." It is on this assumption that Mr. Ball bases his memorandum, and it is on this assumption that the United States committed its greatest foreign policy blunder ever.

South Vietnam's existence as a non-Communist state is no more important to the strategic interests of the United States in Asia than the existence of a non-Communist Yugoslavia is in Europe and the Mediterranean. It is the assumption that a non-Communist Vietnam is so important that has led to the death of several millions of people in Indochina in the last eight years. It is that assumption to which the current President clings as strongly as did his predecessor.

In retrospect, Mr. Ball's memo-

"I miss you too... Hurry home!"



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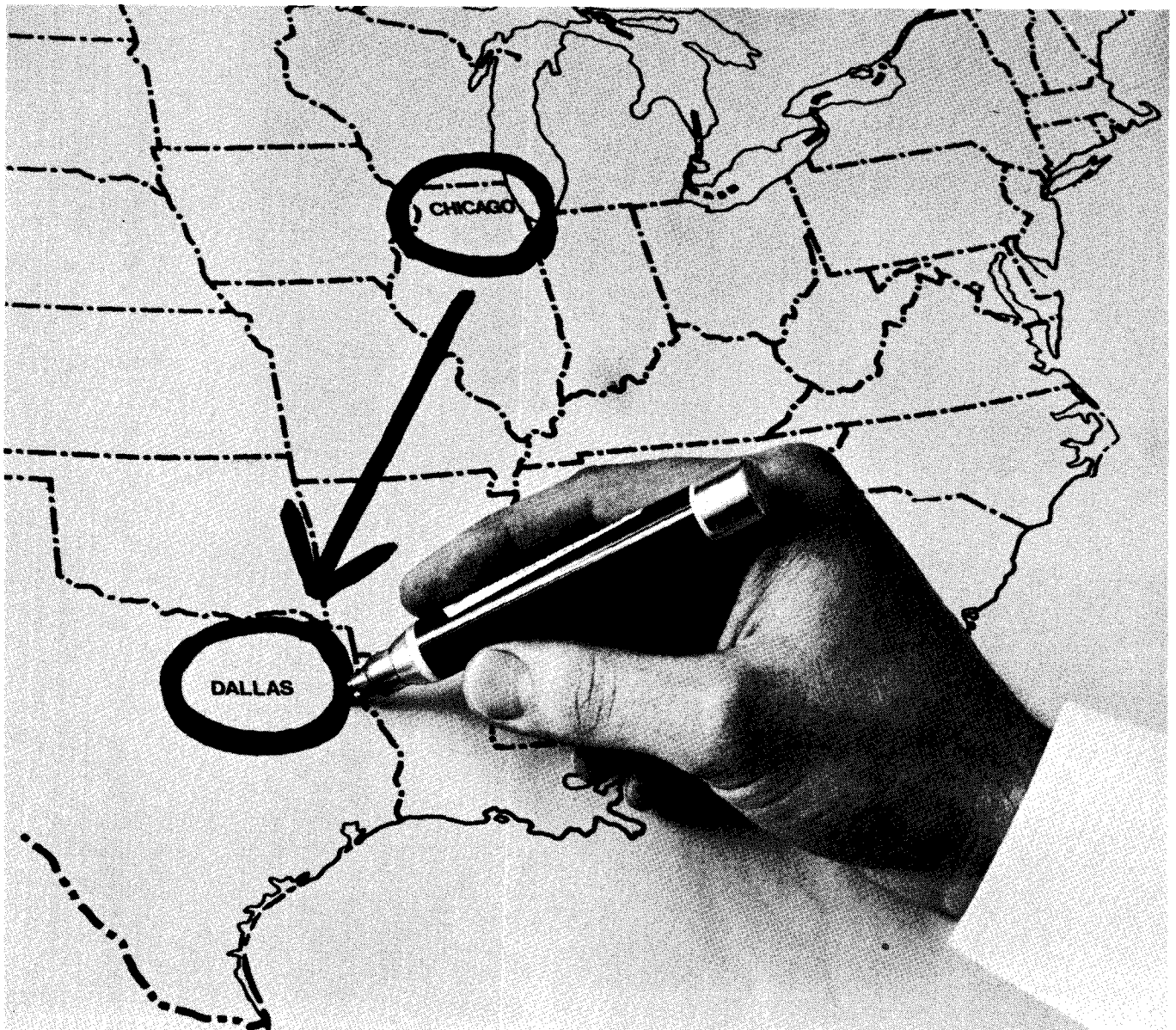
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randum, although less violent in its rhetoric, is of a piece with the position and actions of the Johnson and Nixon administrations in Asia. To recommend less inhumane actions does not make one either human or a hero.

DONALD A. COFFIN
Morgantown, W. Va.

SIR: George W. Ball's memorandum admits, and clearly shows, "the obvious limitations of a personal effort drafted mostly late at night and without benefit of staffing." It contains lengthy but extremely fuzzy thinking of the problem. Mr. Ball refers to land and air warfare but he never comes to grips with the essential key to the situation, the use of sea power.

If President Johnson had imposed a naval blockade in 1964 of Haiphong and smaller seaports, Russian supplies, SAM's, artillery, tanks, and ammunition would never have reached the North Vietnamese or Viet Cong. One ship could unload in a day many times the tonnage over rail from China.

During the 1930s, Japan permitted food and other non-war material to reach China, but not one gun nor bullet made it via the sea. Japanese understood sea power and employed it effectively.

I believe that by the time you print this letter, if you do, President Nixon's action will have brought this ugly war very near to a conclusion.

JOHN A. WHITE
Colonel, USMC, Ret.
Millbrae, Calif.

AMERICA'S AGING

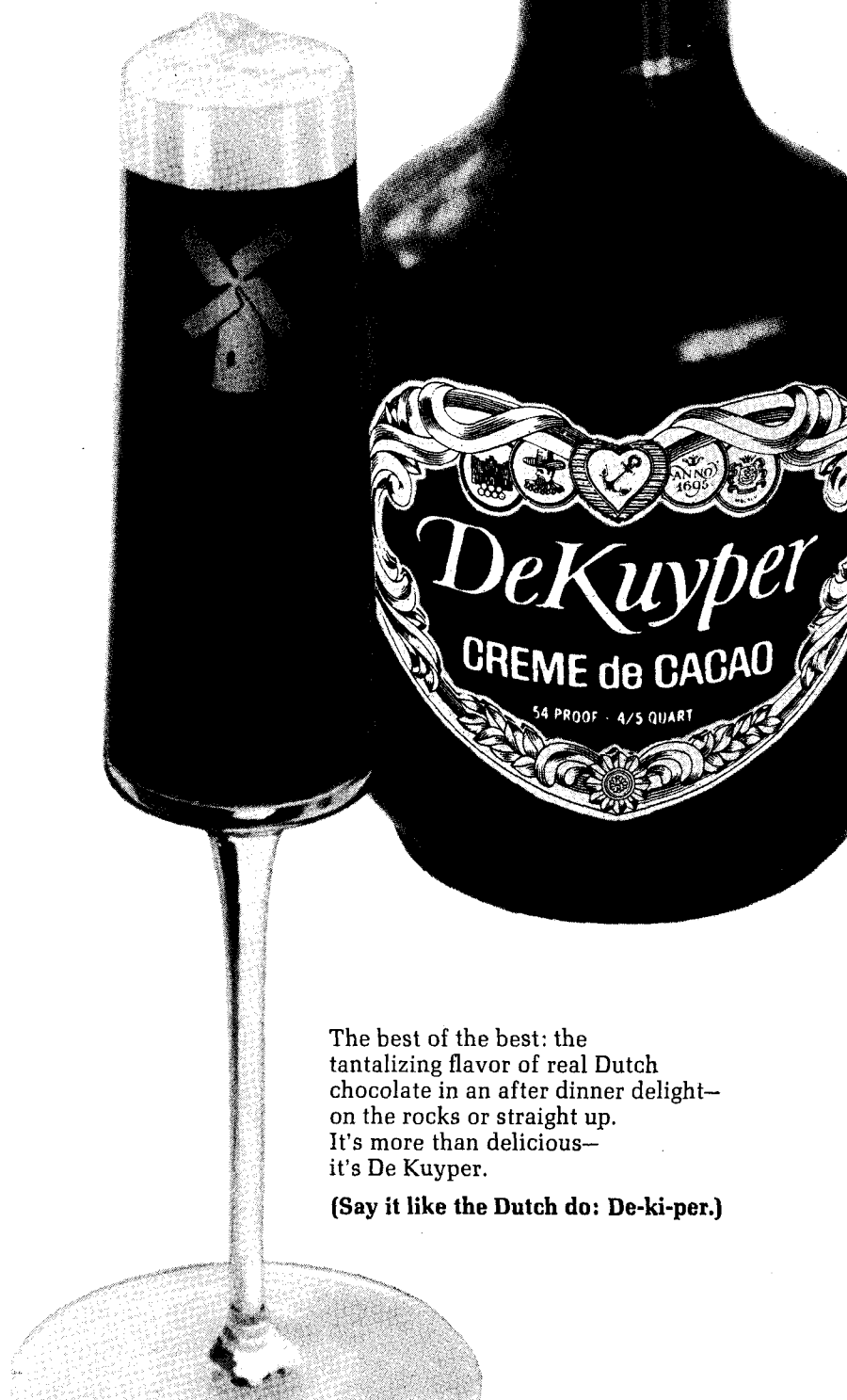
SIR: Sharon Curtin's "Aging in the Land of the Young" (July *Atlantic*) is one of the most compassionate and accurate descriptions of what it means to grow old in America today that I have read. As one who has had occasion to observe what she has so accurately depicted, I would commend her for the excellent article, although she may be somewhat harsh toward Medicare and its accompanying bureaucracy.

The Contributors column refers to Ms. Curtin as a *trained nurse*. I protest the term as an affront to a professional person. The designation "trained nurse" was obsolete even in my days in nursing school, and I am close to retirement age. Certainly in

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this day the enlightened public is familiar with the term "registered, or professional, nurse"—never, never, never "trained nurse." For shame! A professional nurse is educated, not trained.

MARTHA HARRIS JEFFERS, R.N.
Grove City, Pa.

SIR: Sharon Curtin wonders aloud whether hers is the last generation in which people of different age groups will have a sense of living history, and where old, young, middle-in-between people can comfortably live with each other.

I suspect our problem is the misuse of intellectual technology: namely, our practice of classifying and categorizing groups for social analysis. It is a fact that a certain age group or a particular ethnic group will exhibit a statistically high identification with a categorized behavior or attitude or belief. Unfortunately, if one misuses, as so many people do today, those categories, then one can stop looking at people as individuals, and we begin a kind of dehumanized way of looking at each other as the stereotype of classification. For example, it is a fact that old people are physically less active and agile than young people, but when we let that factor begin to dominate our thoughts we forget about the individual and we have put up a barrier to human relationships, thus isolating ourselves.

This misuse of social identification is causing endless mischief in all forms of relationships. It surely is preventing many of the youths and middle-aged from a comfortable, pleasant relationship with senior citizens. Sharon Curtin noted that the very young do not make this mistake. They still have not obtained the analytical schooling in categorization, and thus their relationships are more humane ones.

ALAN J. LEVY
Forest Hills Gardens, N.Y.

SIR: "Aging in the Land of the Young" was fine reading—if appreciated as candid sharing of a young adult's highly individualistic experiences. Ms. Curtin's essay, I feel, omits the full tragedy of aging.

The threat of aging comes with increased hardship in walking, stair-climbing, and handling of day-to-day affairs. As spontaneity and zest in life decline, conversation becomes a mat-

ter of recollection or perseverance. The tragedy in aging is when each day is identical with that which preceded and follows and when existence is dull, dreary, unvarying, homebound, and mind-destroying. It is when TV is the strongest stimulation which older persons enjoy. This is, unfortunately, what too many of us or our parents must face in the midst of a mobile, body beautiful, existential "you've got a lot to live" environment—and the unpleasant prospect deserves accurate journalistic focus.

BARBARA J. NUSSBAUM
Chicago, Ill.

SIR: It is deplorable to see the sociological problem of aging treated in a totally mushy manner by Sharon Curtin in "Aging in the Land of the Young."

Fundamentally, old people do not differ from any other group of people except that their perspective is narrowed, their individual personality traits are more pronounced, and their sense of self-preservation is urgent. Like most nurses, Sharon Curtin confuses the concept of empathy with sympathy, as illustrated in her attitude toward the two old hobos.

The maintenance of extended care facilities is a highly lucrative industry with emphasis on cutting corners to keep the expenses down. Hence the shortage of staff and the poorly paid workers. If these "sentimental fools" (many of them young) were not willing to devote their efforts to the care of the aged, old people (not always darlings) would be left to their own devices.

In my opinion, Sharon Curtin's article is unfit for publication in *The Atlantic*.

KATHERINE SIEG
San Francisco, Calif.

SIR: I have never, ever, ever, ever, EVER read such a depressing (and probably factual) story in all my life (of forty-two years) as "Aging in the Land of the Young."

I really had to battle myself to not go put my head in an oven.

I can only wish for Sharon Curtin, for myself, and every other living mortal, a quick terminal heart seizure, well before their eligibility for Montcliff, or any similar place.

WILLIAM J. SINCLAIR, JR.
Evanston, Ill.

Contributors

ROBERT SAM ANSON, author of *McGovern: A Political Biography*, covered the Democratic nominee during convention week.

MICHAEL JANEWAY is managing editor of *The Atlantic*.

ELIZABETH DREW is *The Atlantic's* Washington-based editor.

HEDRICK SMITH is Moscow correspondent for the *New York Times*.

'ADAM SMITH' is the author of *Supermoney*, to be published this fall, from which this article is adapted.

DAVID HALBERSTAM's forthcoming book is called *The Best and the Brightest*; this article is drawn from it.

ROBERT GRAVES is a poet, novelist, critic, and translator.

DONALD BARTHELME's new collection of stories is to be called *Sadness*.

JAROLD RAMSEY teaches English at the University of Rochester.

MELVIN MADDOCKS' reviews and essays appear often in these pages.

R. D. SKILLINGS is a fellow at Provincetown's Fine Arts Work Center.

LINDA ARKING, author of "A Visit with Jacques Lipchitz" (*The Atlantic*, March, 1971), has lived in Tuscany.

WARD JUST, a contributing editor, is at work on a novel.

BARRY SPACKS is the author of a recently published novel, *Orphans*.

W. H. AUDEN's forthcoming book of poems is *Epistle to a Godson*.

ARTHUR T. HADLEY won awards for his 1971 reporting from Vietnam.

WILLIAM ABRAHAM, a contributing editor, is coauthor of *The Unknown Orwell*, to be published this fall.

EDWIN NEWMAN is an NBC newsmen.

RICHARD POIRIER's most recent book is *The Performing Self*.

L. E. SISSMAN, FERNANDO KRAHN, EDWARD WEEKS, and PHOEBE ADAMS appear regularly in these pages.

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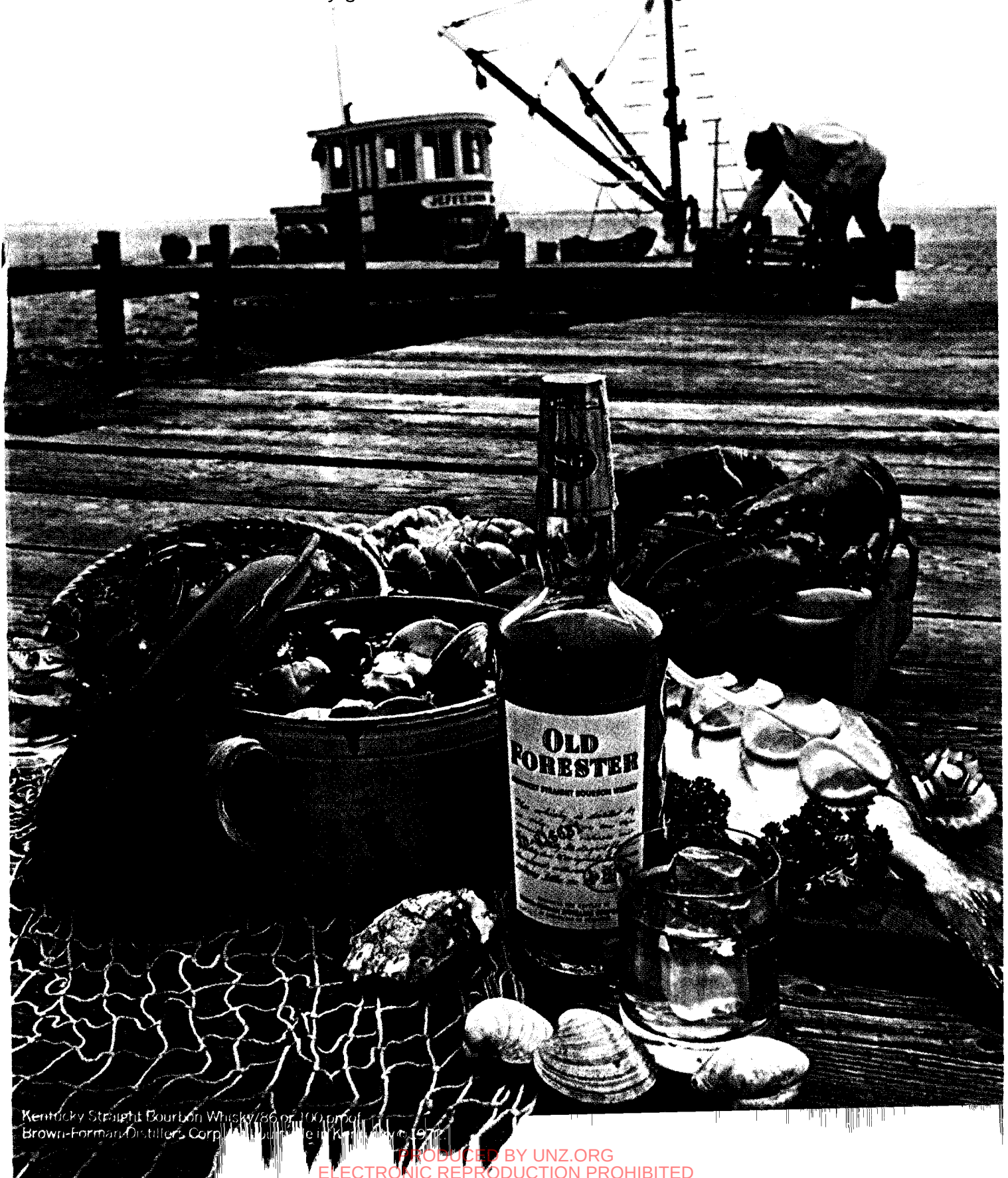
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THE LAST DAYS OF COWBOY CAPITALISM

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Prince Valiant and the Protestant Ethic; Work and Its
Discontents; Will General Motors Believe in Harmony?
Will General Electric Believe in Beauty and Truth?
Of the Greening and Blueing, and Cotton Mather;
What Is To Be Done on Monday Morning?

by 'Adam Smith'

Economist Kenneth Boulding has written that man has lived through history in a "cowboy economy," reckless, exploitative, romantic, and violent. Author 'Smith' reports on the end of that era, and the hazy dawn of a new one.

It was about five o'clock in the afternoon and the snow was getting worse and I began to ask myself what I was doing in the Pink Elephant Bar in Lordstown, Ohio. The Pink Elephant is on the highway, Route 45, and so is the Seven Mile Inn, and Rod's Tavern is just off the highway, and the highway is the one that goes by the new \$250-million General Motors plant that makes Vegas on the world's most automated assembly line. My friend Bill and I go up, cold, to these various characters, some of them indeed with moustaches and long hair

and sideburns, and there we are: boy social scientists, amateur pollsters. Can we talk to you? Can we buy you a beer? Rolling Rock or Genesee? Do you work in the Vega plant? Is that a good place to work? I mean, would you tell your brother or your son to get a job there? What do you do there? Does your wife work? Do you want another beer? When you get your paycheck, what do you spend it on? Do you spend it in stores, for things, or do you pay it to people—doctors, barbers, plumbers? What do you think of the kids in the plant? The old guys? The blacks? The foremen? The management? Do you want another beer? What do you want to do with your life?

At one point this character in a leather jacket comes up behind us who looks like an old pro football player gone a bit soft—not a tackle, a guard or a linebacker, maybe six-three, two forty-five—and he says, "I heard you talkin'."

We wait. Some tension in the air, momentarily.
"Air you fum West Vihginyuh?"

"If only life would quiet down for a while."

We are not from West Virginia. Bill is from Detroit and I am flown from the canyons of Gotham.

"I knew you wasn't fum here. You talk lahk you're fum another country."

Well, yes, I say, it is another country.

"Good, lemme buy you a beer, I lahk to talk to people fum other countries."

What do you make per hour? Would you rather have overtime or the time off? Is there a generation gap? Would you buy one of the cars you make? What does the union do for you? Why do you work there? What would you rather do? Do you think things are working properly in the country?

You can see all the contemporary social science bits going on: Attitude/Authority? Agree/Disagree Sick Society? Attitude/Work?

Our ambitions are very modest. Bill is doing a story. Maybe he can get another Pulitzer, why not have two? And as for me—why, I am just looking for clues, see, *The Future of American Capitalism*. I am going through the money-management macro bit in an untraditional way. The man running the money comes into his office, puts on his green eyeshade and his sleeve garters, and says: How goes the world today? And how will it go in six months? A year? But what does he know then? He reads reports and numbers, but what do they tell?

In our recent history the system has survived a series of crises and panics, though some bright people failed in the process. Are we then back to normal, a big sigh of relief and business as usual? Or is there *Something Else Going On*? Maybe the system is changing, maybe our view of reality was distorted all the time. The very bright people were in charge of the government and making the world safe for democracy, and not only is the world not safe for democracy, it is not even safe in Central Park and downtown Detroit, and nobody wants to go out after dark. We put the money into public housing and it turns into disasters such as Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis, and twenty-two downtowns look like Berlin in 1945. We did put men on the moon, but do we really know how to manage, and how to perform?

The estimable white-haired and pipe-smoking chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, Arthur Burns, comes to report to the Joint Economic Committee of Congress. Clutched in his hand is the Fed's report for the year, and its promises for the future. The report is all about the Fed's business, which is money and credit, and the estimable white-haired and pipe-smoking chairman says that the Fed is going to do everything just right: it is not going to let the recovery falter for lack of credit, nor is it going to put out so much credit that we will have another inflationary spiral. But before Burns delivers the re-

port, he has to make some remarks that are not in the report. Maybe "old-fashioned remedies"—that is, those available to Arthur Burns: the levers of credit—can't do the job. Businessmen aren't responding in the usual ways. Consumers aren't responding in the usual ways. "Something has happened to our system of responses. Troubled times have left a psychological mark on people. Americans are living in a troubled world, and they themselves are disturbed."

What can the matter be? Well, "a long and most unhappy war," and busing, and the youth vote, and campus disorders, and urban race riots, and the fact that "women also are marching in the streets." Oh my God, women are marching in the streets.

"If only life would quiet down for a while," said the chairman of the Fed. The classic economic policies would have a better chance of working *if only life would quiet down for a while*.

So said the chairman of the Fed, hardly one of your bomb-throwing radicals.

Something has happened to our system of responses. If only life would quiet down for a while.

Poor Arthur Burns, you press the levers and the right things don't happen, and the problem is life itself. But maybe that is life; maybe that is the way things are going to be from now on. Good God, women marching in the streets, nobody responding in the usual ways. Mind-boggling.

So that is one of the reasons I am getting a bit bloated on Rolling Rock beer in the Pink Elephant Bar on Route 45 in Lordstown, Ohio. The economists have made their usual cheery predictions—ah, for the days when Keynes hoped that economists would be accorded the status of good dentists.

If you simply read the financial pages, you would find no hint of anything different. The typeface is the same, the language is the same, and the reports are all of prices: bonds are up, the dollar is down, retail sales are up—sheer minutiae. So everything is back to normal, we had a bad turn there at the end of the sixties, we had to hold our breath a little, but now we can go back to the old stand. Think back to the way it was when Eisenhower was on the throne, the pound was worth a pound, and the bells rang out over the land on the Fourth of July. From *Time* magazine on the Fourth of July, 1955:

From Franconia Notch, New Hampshire, to San Francisco, California, this week, there was clear and convincing evidence of patience, determination, optimism and faith among the people of the U.S. In the 29 months since Dwight D. Eisenhower moved into the White House, a remarkable change had come

over the nation. . . . The national blood pressure and temperature had gone down, the nerve endings had healed. . . . In and around the cities, bulldozers and pneumatic drills and rivet guns played an unending symphony of progress . . . at the office coffee breaks, talk was easy and calm, not about the coming war or the coming depression.

Has the symphony of progress come back? Or does Arthur Burns really have something to worry about?

They say, for example, that the good old Protestant Ethic has died away. Whatever happened to work? Doesn't anybody want to? And growth: the whole system is geared to growth, that is its justification, it *works* better. What is all this about no-growth, zero population growth, zero economic growth? There is only so much stuff in and on the planet, and at the rate we are using it up in x years there will be no planet. Apocalyptic literature arrives not only on the ecological front but on the cultural front. "The revolution of the twentieth century will take place in the United States," writes a French critic, Jean-François Revel, "and it has already begun." "There is a revolution coming," writes Charles Reich. "It will not be like revolutions of the past. It will originate with the individual and with culture, and it will change the political structure only as its final act . . . this is the revolution of the new generation."

If *any* of this is true, we cannot simply go back to where we were. Radical change is very hard for most people to contemplate. For the man in the green eyeshade managing money, it's no different. The money manager's attitude is: sure, changes, we sell something and we buy something else to fit the changes. You say work is going out of style? We'll buy play. Here are my six Leisure Time stocks, and let me tell you how long I've owned Disney. Money managers operate on the theory of displacement: the framework will be the same, but inside you move things around. My favorite is a gentleman I ran into after I got back from the Vega plant. I told him that one problem among others in certain localities was dope addiction, and at one plant—though the number sounded very high to me—the rate was reported to be 14 percent.

"Well," he said, "I haven't owned an auto stock for years. But fourteen percent! Geez, *who makes the needles?*"

The Chairman was pleased to report sharply higher profits for the year, due to increased sales of the entire line of hospital supply equipment. The reasons for the record profitability, said the Chairman, were Medicare, Medicaid, and the sharply increased use of the company's new handy throw-away needle by the burgeoning heroin addiction market.

Now it may be that displacement is all we have to consider. Ah, *things* are out, quality of life is in, back to the countryside. There is a waiting list for ten-speed bicycles; who makes the ten-speed bicycles? Ah, the ecologists are gaining strength; where is our list of water-pollution companies?

That is probably good thinking on the tactical level, but there is also a strategic level, and the strategic level has to consider what the more profound changes are, and in fact it ought to, even without the rather parochial justification of buying and selling.

So this is why I am in Lordstown, just as one stop, looking for the sources of Arthur Burns's angst: Will life quiet down?

In the automobile industry, to consider the parochial side for a moment, rewards and punishments are very tangible, and since the automobile industry is such a fantastic part of America, profound change would affect us all. General Motors—my God, nobody can comprehend the *size* of General Motors; it makes one out of every seven manufacturing dollars in the country; its sales are bigger than the budget of any of the fifty states, and of any *country* in the world except the United States and the Soviet Union. But even General Motors has a problem. As Henry Ford II said, *the Japanese are waiting in the wings*. Someday, he said, they might build all the cars in America. The problem, or one of them, is that imports keep rising, in spite of the theology of Detroit, which always maintained: little cars, fah! Americans won't buy them; Americans want power, a sex symbol, racing stripes, air scoops for nonexistent air, portholes for nonexistent water; they want to leave two big black tire marks going away from the stoplight, rubber on the road. And the names went with the technology: Firebirds and Thunderbirds, Cougars and Barracudas and Impalas, *growrrrr*, nothing about driving a handy little car there—so the handy little cars sold were foreign.

Eventually so many handy little cars were sold that the impact on the balance of payments was sickening, and even Washington began to put pressure on Detroit, and Detroit figured OK, we'll build a handy little car. General Motors was not about to have any more of the problems of urban Detroit; it put its \$250-million Vega plant in the middle of an Ohio cornfield. And then this work force showed up, the youngest work force around, and *look* at them—hair down to the shoulder blades, moustaches, bell-bottoms, the whole bit; it looks like Berkeley or Harvard Square.

It was a Ford official who wrote the paragraph below. The same thing applies not only in the automobile industry but probably in much of factory work.

The memo is from an industrial relations man to his superiors, and he is talking about the present and the future. This gentleman is nobody's fool, and his memo should be in the sociology texts, not in the filing cabinets. (The memo was photocopied, and a friend of mine got a copy and copied it again, so I have one, and I guess the UAW has one, because its vice-president Ken Bannon used some of the same phrases word for word in an interview. Communication by *samizdat*: think what Xerox will do in Russia when it gets going.)

The rate of disciplinary cases was going up; turnover was up two and a half times; absenteeism was alarming on Mondays and Fridays. (Hence the useless advice never to buy a car built on a Monday or a Friday. But your dealer will tell you *his* cars are built only on Tuesdays and Thursdays.) Furthermore, the workers weren't listening to the foremen and the supervisors. And why?

For many, the traditional motivations of job security, money rewards, and opportunity for personal advancement are proving insufficient. Large numbers of those we hire find factory life so distasteful they quit after only brief exposure to it. The general increase in real wage levels in our economy has afforded more alternatives for satisfying economic needs. Because they are unfamiliar with the harsh economic facts of earlier years, [new workers] have little regard for the consequences if they take a day or two off . . . the traditional work ethic—the concept that hard work is a virtue and a duty—will undergo additional erosion.

General Motors was going to outflank that stuff with the newest, most automated plant; machines would take over a lot of the repetitive jobs; the plant would be in that cornfield in Ohio, near Youngstown, away from all those problems of the, uh, you know, core city. Everything at Lordstown would be made in America, no imported parts, the apogee of American industrialism. The head of Chevrolet buzzed in for a Knute Rockne pep talk. *America* was going to make the small car, by golly, and that was the end of the elves in the Black Forest and the industrious Yellow Peril in Toyota City, who thought they had been in the small-car business. Planeloads of newsmen were flown in. The line is going to do a hundred cars an hour, lots of it without any people; *kachunk* goes the machine that pops the wheel rim into the tire, *pfffft* goes the machine that blows up the tire.

So what is all this about trouble in Lordstown? The line is not going at a hundred cars an hour—at least not much of the time—and there are all these characters, all good UAW Local 1112, average age twenty-five, the youngest work force practically anywhere, peace medals, bell-bottoms, and hair like Prince Valiant, and the union president is twenty-

nine and has a Fu Manchu moustache like the one Joe Namath shaved off, and GM is going up the wall. Where is the *productivity*? Curtis Cox, the supervisor of standards and methods, is getting apoplectic. "I see *foreign* cars in the parking lot," he says. "The owners say they are cheaper. How is this country going to compete?" The GM people practically weep when they think about Japan: all those nice, industrious workers, *singing* the alma mater in the morning—"Hail to Thee, O Mitsubishi"—whistling on their way to work like the Seven Dwarfs, for God's sake—never a strike, never a cross word—playing on the company teams, asking the foreman if it is OK to get engaged to this very nice girl as soon as the foreman meets her.

So I ask General Motors quite routinely if I can go see this apogee of American industrialism, say, Tuesday, and General Motors says *no*, never.

I admit to being a bit stunned. Do they not fly planeloads of people there all the time? Did they not fly alleged same planeloads at the end of the GM strike, together with appropriate refreshment, to watch the first Vega come off the line, with a handout about how the Vega was going to Mrs. Sadie Applepie, library assistant of Huckleberry Finn, Illinois, with a quote all ready from Mrs. Applepie: "Oh, I have been waiting so long for my Vega, I can't believe it's finally here, I'm so excited," did they not? What do they mean, no, not that guy? Who the hell do they think I am, Ralph Nader? I begin thumbing my other notebook that has the number of the pay phone in the hallway of Nader's boardinghouse, and it's off to Lordstown. Because even with plant guards, General Motors is not Russia; and anybody who has graduated from the good ol' U.S. Army knows how to deal with the lower levels of great bureaucracies. (Where you going with that rake? What rake, sir? *That* rake. Oh, *this* rake, the captain, sir, he said take it over there. *What* captain? The other captain. What other captain? Beats me, lieutenant, they just told me take the rake.)

So we are walking around the plant at Lordstown, all \$250 million of it very visible, like an iron and steel tropical rain forest with the electric drills screaming like parakeets and the Unimate robot welders bending over the Vegas like big mother birds and the Prince Valiants of Local 1112 zanking away with their new expensive electrical equipment. Vegas grow before your eyes. Beautiful. I recommend it, next time you are taking the Howard Johnson tour across the land of the free.

But what are these cars waiting for repair, marked

**“I’m not going to bust my ass for anybody.
I don’t even bust my ass for myself.”**

no high beam signal, dome lite inoperative, no brakes . . . no brakes? no brakes. And what is this on the bulletin board?

Management has experienced serious losses of production due to poor quality workmanship, deliberate restriction of output, failure or refusal to perform job assignments and sabotage.

Efforts to discourage such actions through the normal application of corrective discipline have not been successful. Accordingly, any further misconduct of this type will be considered cause for severe disciplinary measures, including dismissal.

“Corrective discipline”? My God, you can get *court-martialed* in this place. They should have an industrial psychologist read the language on the bulletin board. I can hear the glee club louder, “Hail to Thee, O Fair Toyota.”

Hi there.

Hi.

What is that?

That’s the window trim.

Is this a good place to work?

Well, it will be, as soon as we get it shaped up.

Would you buy one of these cars?

Sure, if it wasn’t so expensive; it’s a well-engineered little car.

Wouldn’t you rather be out on your own, say, a garage?

Naw, a garage don’t have no benefits.

Say, I don’t want to bother you, two of those Vegas just went by without window trim.

Well, they all go by without somethin’; this line is moving too fast.

That’s productivity, man.

Oh, is that what they call it?

I can give you a few notes of our brilliantly unscientific survey of Lordstown, but they are just that. Our people would rather have had the time off than the overtime. But their wives worked because they needed the extra income. They would tell their brother to get a job there, and in fact some of them did. Supervisors bugged everybody. Sabotage? Beer cans welded to the inside of a fender? Well, there might be a few hotheads, but that’s silly, man, the Vega is our bread and butter—the more Vegas they sell, the better for us. If the foremen bugged our people too much, they would get another job somewhere else; they took for granted there would be such a job.

We asked the older types if the young bucks were any different. They said: “Yes. They’re smarter. They don’t put up with what we did.”

Our favorite Prince Valiant haircut said: “I’m not

going to bust my ass for anybody. I don’t even bust my ass for myself, you know, working around the house.”

The key phrases quoted above were from the auto executive’s confidential, much photocopied, memo. The next key phrases are from the banks of the Charles River. The Harvard Business School is the West Point of capitalism, or at least so its denizens tell each other, and certainly the place has provided one of the great Old Boy networks of modern times. Let a Business-School type foul up out there in the world and he need not fear, another Business-School type will come to his rescue and they will call it merger, or recapitalization, or synergy, or something. I have two straws in the wind to submit from the West Point of capitalism.

Admittedly, these come from an unusual time. Two years before, the greedy little bastards in Investment Management could hardly wait to get going on their first five million. Now there is a new crop of greedy little bastards. The course I am visiting as a guest lecturer is still wildly popular, but outside, the Cambodian invasion has been timed neatly with my spring visit. The feeling that all is not well in the world has even penetrated the clouds of greed in my three sections. Around Harvard Square the graffiti are getting political; nobody has written *Eloise Loves Abelard* in quite a while; instead this flows in large letters for a third of a block:

JOHN HANCOCK WAS A REVOLUTIONARY, NOT AN OBSCENE LIFE INSURANCE SALESMAN

But that, of course, is on the College side of the Charles River, where the life-style is different—beards and moustaches and poor-boy clothes, almost as much a uniform as the gray flannel jackets and khaki pants of a generation before. Across the river at the Business School, the budding apparatchniks are coming to class in Brooks Brothers suits and button-down white shirts, looking like sub-assistant secretaries in the Nixon Administration.

There is no revolutionary chatter in the course catalogue at the B School. You find one of the major preoccupations of the catalogue is control: “The field of Control deals with the collection, processing, analysis, reporting, and use of quantitative information in a business.” In a previous year, when an SDS faction took over University Hall in the College and there was a big bust, the College as an institution seemed very confused, but the Business School had a Contingency Plan in a fat binder with colored index tabs. I gave the classes at that time, too, and one B-School faculty member, fearing some Dickensian carnagole in the streets, Paris, 1789, said of the dis-

"We're objective, but maybe objectivity has been overdone. Is our one purpose to measure *things*?"

senters: "They'll never make it to this side of the river. We'll blow the bridges first."

So: this is not the Last Bastion, it is not Bob Jones University or even Utah State; it is where they grow the apparatchniks, the technicians who sop up the top spots a generation hence, and if Something Else Is Going On, these types will either lead it or fight it or try to take it over after it gets going.

First straw. *Notes from a Class.*

The guest lecturer has posed a Case. You are running a portfolio of a hundred million dollars. (Baby stuff.) You are in a competition not unlike the one the Chase Manhattan runs among competing money managers. The worst-performing portfolio managers at the end of a certain time get fired. The best get more money to run, and presumably appropriate rewards.

Company A is a notorious polluter, but its profits are unimpaired. Company B is buying antipollution equipment that will depress its profits for years. Other things being equal, which do you buy, A or B? The Case was not too far from reality. Ralph Nader's Project on Corporate Responsibility was trying to put some people on the General Motors board, and Harvard owns 305,000 shares of General Motors. Harvard's treasurer reportedly said he was going to vote for management "because they are our kind of people," after which both faculty and students generated a furious debate. The Case is not limited to pollution only; the same principles of the social purpose of investment can be applied to defense contractors, the makers of napalm, companies with investments or branches in South Africa, and so on.

All right, you want to achieve performance in your portfolio, and this performance is being measured competitively. It may affect your career. Do you buy Company A, the profitable polluter, or Company B, the unprofitable antipolluter?

Student One: I would try to evaluate the long-term effect . . . because in the long run Company B is going to have a better image.

Student Two: But in the long run you would have lost the account. I think you have to know the wishes of the constituency. If it's a fund, how do the fundholders feel? What do they want? (*Scattered boos. The class begins to chant, "A or B, A or B."*)

Several other students offer comments, all trying to hedge, to keep both the profit and the social purpose.

Student Three: I buy the polluter. (*Cheers, then scattered boos.*) It isn't the business of a fund manager to make a social decision, or to discriminate between companies on his own ideas of some social purpose. That could be dangerous. If we want to combat pollution, let society vote for it, and have a consensus. I doubt that consumers really want to pay the price.

You can't ask profit-making organizations to subsidize society.

The Radical Student (the Radical Student is only radical by standards of this side of the river, which is to say that he is neatly shaven but is wearing a colored shirt and a tie that is a bit wider than the 1955 width): Maybe that's the problem. Everything in this school is geared to the purpose of the corporation, and that purpose is maximized profit.

We ask the Radical Student: "What are the goals of a corporation, if not to maximize profit?"

Silence in the classroom, a rustling of papers. The idea is very confusing.

What are the goals of a corporation, if not to maximize profit?

Not a hand goes up. It is just too hairy a question. We ask it once more. More shuffling, an occasional left wrist shoots out from the cuff with the wristwatch exposed.

The Radical Student: You know the trouble? It's the way we look at it. We're concerned with property rights. At the Law School, say, they talk about civil rights. We're objective, but maybe objectivity has been overdone. Is our one purpose to measure *things*?

My second straw is the Resolution. This was, as I said, an emotional time. The Business School voted and passed this, then bought an ad in the *Wall Street Journal* to publicize it. The Resolution called for American withdrawal from Southeast Asia, not startling for a student resolution at that time. But this was the Business School, normally heavily Republican, heavily Republican in 1968, and it was the *language* juxtaposed to the source that was startling:

We condemn the administration of President Nixon for its view of mankind [*its view of mankind?*] and the American community which:

1. Perceives the anxiety and turmoil in our midst as the work of "bums" and "effete snobs";
2. Fails to acknowledge that legitimate doubt exists about the ability of black Americans and other depressed groups to obtain justice;
3. Is unwilling to move for a transformation of American society in accordance with the goals of maximum fulfillment for each human being and harmony between mankind and nature.

Harmony between mankind and nature?

I asked the former dean of admissions what was this about harmony between mankind and nature; when had that crept into the Business School?

"I don't know," he said. "I guess it means they're not going to work for Procter & Gamble and make those dishwasher soaps that don't dissolve and

smother the lakes. They don't want to work for big companies anyway, or so they say; I'd like to see what they say a couple of years out. The big companies treat them as objects, they say. In the fifties, the guys here all wanted to get to the top of Procter & Gamble. In the sixties it was finance."

"Last year," I said, "my classes all wanted to go right to work for a hedge fund. You couldn't even offer them twenty thousand a year, because they were going to run five million into ten in a year and take twenty percent of the gain. I used to say, 'good morning, greedy little bastards.'"

"The guys in the fifties," said the ex-dean, "wanted to run the Big Company, and the guys in the sixties wanted to make a big bundle by the time they're forty and run for something."

"And now?"

"And now, they're just confused. I've never seen such malaise. I don't think the big companies have gotten the message yet, and maybe the *Fortune* 500 can run without the Harvard Business School, but I have the feeling something will give on one side or the other."

More recently, I talked to the same ex-dean, who now teaches a popular course, and I asked him what changes there had been. Popular journalism had said that things were "back to normal," whatever that was. Nader's Raiders had been swamped with applicants in the emotional summers, and now the young law students were scuffling in the line when the man from Sullivan & Cromwell came to interview. It was said *pro bono* was over. They didn't even want the social courses anymore; they wanted Taxation and Trusts and Corporations. Were the current B-School classes still holding out on the big corporations? Were the big corporations bending at all?

"They're bending to the extent that they don't come and interview the wives and tell them they have to fit to corporate life, and move fourteen times in fifteen years," he said. "But other than that, all you can say is that they're conscious of some change. As for my students, I think they have an acceptance of corporate life and they're looking for something inner. I hear a lot about life-styles, how they want a nonanxious working life. They don't want to have what one of them called a dumbbell life, which is to say a blob of work at one end, a blob of home life at the other, and a conduit between, a railroad or a freeway. There's a lot of stuff about walking on the beach, that the worthy cause is themselves, and that work should fit life, not the other way around, and they talk a lot about intimate relationships, wives, children, and so on."

"So if I had to divide the decades again, I would still say that the fifties produced the corporate man

who would rise to the top and die seventeen months after retirement, leaving a beautiful estate; the sixties students wanted a piece of the action; and currently the fantasy is a balanced life—just *enough* success to include it all; they want to run things but not at any cost; they still want power but now they want love, too."

Maximum fulfillment for each human being? Harmony between mankind and nature? That's not the old Business School. How do you put those things into a balance sheet? Can we operate a corporate society without objectivity, or at least what has passed for objectivity?

I wrote in my notes: *Will General Motors believe in the harmony between mankind and nature? Will General Electric believe in beauty and truth?*

It is not, of course, a revolutionary idea in the limited history of capitalism in this country to make something for less than a maximum profit. First of all, profit was not necessarily something that could be controlled; it came like the rain on the crops, between the costs and the market. Moreover, when the bulk of business was family-owned, its purpose was to take care of the family—sons, nephews, and so on—and of the product's reputation, if it had a reputation of value. So a wagonmaker could simply make a good wagon, and a book publisher could publish an author simply because he wanted to. What we have come to call social purpose was a matter of individual integrity, randomly and haphazardly applied.

But these businesses sold out to bigger ones, and those in turn to bigger ones. That New York Stock Exchange listing, that broad market with the stock selling at a fancy multiple, the sons of the founders with Caribbean estates, and the grandsons in their pads all secure to blow their minds with 3K electronic guitar apparatus and not worry about work because their money has been salted and peppered into hundreds of trusts so the tax man cannot get it. Only the profits have to keep growing, the multiple on the stock has to go up, and the accountants can't do it all.

Multimillion-dollar businesses can't be run by intuition or seat-of-the-pants engineering. There has to be objectivity, whatever that is, and the continuous quantification of results; we have to have what the course catalogue at the school calls "a rigorous and systematic approach," that is, the collection, processing, analysis, reporting, and use of quantitative information. But there is competition, maybe, and the judgment of those crazy crapshooters in New York: if the earnings go down they will bomb the stock, and then what will our report card look like?

The Cellulose, Paper, and Carton Administration of the Ministry of Timber, Paper, and Woodworking in the USSR is going to have its problems too.

For our man in the green eyeshade asking how goes the world, how will it go, the harmony between mankind and nature becomes an important question, and not just a spiritual one.

Nobody is against such harmony. When ecology first crept into the scene, industry seized it as an advertising opportunity; not a filter was bought that the buyer didn't take an ad about cleaning up the rivers and waters. In fact, at one point someone figured out that more was spent drumbeating about cleanup than on the equipment. Industry began to sense that the public belief that more was better was beginning to fall away. Union Carbide dropped its slogan, *There's a Little Bit of Union Carbide in Everybody's Home*. They wanted you to think of the plastics and the sandwich bags, and instead a Little Bit of Union Carbide meant: the wind's shifted, here it comes again, shut the doors, close the windows, you know what it cost to have the curtains cleaned last time. President Nixon gave an Ecology Speech, and somebody slipped him a real good quote from T. S. Eliot. "Clean the air! clean the sky! wash the wind!"—that's what we are going to do, said the President, not realizing that the very same quote went on, "Take the stone from the stone . . . and wash them. Wash the stone, wash the bone, wash the brain, wash the soul, wash them wash them!" Not ecology at all, but the blood of murder in the cathedral.

But while everybody agrees that mankind and nature should live in harmony, few agree on what that means, or how the cost shall be borne. They have not changed the consciousness of the way they think. To paraphrase University of Colorado economist Kenneth Boulding, man has lived through history in a "cowboy economy" with "illimitable plains" and "reckless, exploitative, romantic, and violent behavior." Consumption was "linear"—that is, materials were extracted from supposedly infinite resources, and waste was tossed into infinite dumps. But we are shifting to a "spaceman economy." The earth is becoming finite, like a closed spaceship; consumption must become "circular"—that is, to conserve what we have, resources must be continuously recycled through the system. Air and water have always been free, and few realize that we are approaching the point in our cowboy ways where we will wrench the earth's ecology out of shape. In *The Closing Circle*, biologist-ecologist Barry Commoner writes that we have to reconsider the true value of the conventional capital accumulated by the operation of the economic system.

According to Commoner, intense environmental pollution in the United States has come with the technological transformation of the productive system since World War II. Production based on the

new technologies has been more profitable than the older technologies they replaced; that is, the newer, more polluting techniques yield higher profits. We could, of course, survive with new technologies, new systems to return sewage and garbage to the soil, retire land from cultivation, replace synthetic pesticides with biological ones, recycle usable materials, and cut down the uses of power. That would cost about six hundred billion dollars, or a quarter of our current capital plant.

Placed in the kind of terms used in the analysts' societies, this debt to nature means there is suddenly a liability on the balance sheet we didn't know was there. It must have been in the footnotes, in fine print. We have been very profitable, but the plant is falling down. We can build a new plant, but we are going to have to amortize the charges against earnings for a long time.

Ah, but then we have a spanking new plant. Isn't that good? Not in the terms, necessarily, that we have been used to considering as good. Of course, we survive, and that's good. And perhaps even prevent life from getting more noxious, that's good. But we have been measuring good as profitable. New capital expenditures are—at some point—supposed to increase the profits. That is why the class is so confused when asked what the purpose of the corporation is. Good is profitable; profitable is new technology; new technology has been polluting, and profitable. Killing whales is very profitable until the day when there are no more whales, because we have only been amortizing the ships and the radar and the depth charges and harpoons. We haven't amortized the whales and anyway, how do you replace whales?

But the debt to nature, paid, does not increase either productivity or profitability. Thus, the corporation probably is not going to pay up unless the society compels it, induces it, inveigles it, or brings it about in some other way. The vision of good is simply too far removed from the vision of what has been perfectly good in the hundreds of years of cowboy economics.

This is going to be true not just for the United States and not just for capitalism. The Cellulose, Paper, and Carton Administration of the Ministry of Timber, Paper, and Woodworking in the USSR is going to have its problems too. It has its quotas, and the boys at the ministry get their satisfactions from churning out the stuff, and ecology freaks are everywhere. This is from Professor Marshall Goldman's account of the pollution of Lake Baikal, the world's oldest lake and largest body of fresh water by volume. The manager of the plant is asked why a new waste filter has not been installed. Says he: "It's expensive. The Ministry of Timber, Paper, and Wood-

working is trying to invest as few funds as possible in the construction of paper and timber enterprises in order to make possible the attainment of good indices per ruble of capital investment. These indices are being achieved by the refusal to build purification installations."

The finite-earth argument leads almost inexorably to a call for an end to growth, both in population and industrial output. Growth in industrial output is one of the justifications for both capitalism and socialism, each to each. When Khrushchev talked about burying us, he was bragging about increases in industrial production. Increases in our gross national product have been hailed as the triumph of our system.

The most dramatic assault on growth came from a group at MIT, sponsored by The Club of Rome and headed by Dennis Meadows, which built a mathematical model of the world system with the interrelationships of population, food supply, natural resources, pollution, and industrial production. The Meadows group produced a doomsday equation: the world is out of business in less than a century, unless the "will" is generated to begin "a controlled, orderly transition from growth to global equilibrium." Even new technologies, such as nuclear power sources, said the group, wouldn't help much. The team doubled the resources and assumed that recycling cut the demand to one-fourth; even optimistic estimates didn't put the day of doom off longer than 2100. We are going to stop growing one way or the other, said the group, the other being the collapse of the industrial base through depleted resources, and then lack of food and medical services.

This report did not lack for critics. One economist said it was "Malthus, with lights and a computer"; others said the base was too skimpy for the assumptions, and that future science and future technology were unknown. If you had assumed our population growth in 1880 without the automobile, you could have assumed asphyxiation by horse manure. If materials were going to become visibly scarce, would not the prices begin to anticipate scarcity? And would not new materials and new power sources be developed? The representatives of less-developed countries who considered the report at a Smithsonian symposium were particularly alarmed, because freezing growth without some sort of worldly distribution of income would keep them at their current levels. The poorer nations, said the Indian ambassador, would "slide down to starvation." At another international conference, the Malaysians said: "Some of us would rather see smoke coming out of a factory and men employed than no factory," and, "We are

not concerned with pollution but with existence."

At the laissez-faire end of the spectrum, economists like Milton Friedman of the University of Chicago think that in arguments over social issues "there is a strong tendency for people to substitute their own values for the values of others." The current pollution concern is "an upper-income demand—the high-income people want to get the low-income people to pay for something that the high-income people value . . . people moved from the clear, clean countryside to the polluted cities—not the other way around—because the advantages of the city outweigh the disadvantages." Left alone, "people are more likely to act in their own interests, to evaluate the costs and benefits of their own activities."

It is, of course, hard to legislate changes in consciousness. But most economists are unwilling to give up growth as a goal. World population is certain to grow for many years to come, an extra billion between 1960 and 1975, three more billion in the next quarter-century. Even if that rate of increase is slowed, you need growth just to keep pace. In a world of no growth but more people, you only accomplish one person's well-being, or one nation's, at the expense of another. That is the kind of redistribution of wealth we had before there was any surplus wealth to compound, when people in skins hit each other over the head with mastodon thighbones to accomplish the redistribution. Presumably we have only recently outgrown such activity, and the record of social maturity is not a record anybody would trust to the application of economic problems. So the doomsday equations have at least the virtue of getting people to think about the problems of a finite earth; it will take long enough to do something about it anyway.

It is from the increments that poverty is alleviated and the goals of the society met. If there are social problems—such as pollution—that can't be met by the market mechanism, they can be met by a pricing system: by penalizing the polluter, let us say, or giving a tax incentive to achieve the desired end. This is not a net gain to growth in the traditional ways we have measured growth, because the stimulus from investments in pollution control is outweighed by the price rise in the end product, hence a damper on total demand. A study prepared for the Council on Environmental Quality, a government office, indicated this could be done for a small percentage of annual GNP, less than one percent, for air and water.

Even if the ecological crisis is overstated and far away, even if social problems can be solved with the existing mechanism—both of those points arguable—the consensus is moving away from the market as decision-maker and from the business society. "What's

The Protestant Ethic has found its happiest current home in Japan.

good for General Motors is good for the country,” said Charles Wilson, one of Eisenhower’s business-men cabinet members. It would be interesting to see, year by year, what percentage of the people agree with that, and to watch the change.

So the money manager in the green eyeshade will no longer be operating in a world where the market determines totally what is produced (and induced), nor in a society run by business decisions. Capital is scarcer and profits are thinner. He is still looking for three stocks that will double, but the range of his options has decreased. He has always looked not just at profits, E , but at the rate of change in estimated profits, $E + \Delta E$, and in the long run—the broad run, the macro scene, whatever—*his expectations are diminished*.

Open-ended expectations are an integral part of the markets we have grown up to know. Without them, the calculators can calculate the rates of return, and everybody can be on their way home at 10:05 A.M. to work on their Leisure Time, or more likely, to attend some committee meeting that will be devised to take up the remaining hours.

Having thus dispatched the spirit of capitalism, let us see what we can do with the Protestant Ethic. That phrase describes a devotion to thrift and industry, hard work and postponed pleasure, the hustle as approved by the Lord. It accompanied the Puritan temper, a rather forbidding and pleasure-shy view of life, and is aptly described in the confidential Ford memo together with the complaint that it is disappearing: “the traditional work ethic—the concept that hard work is a virtue and a duty—will undergo additional erosion.” (You have already seen the seeds of conflict, because if Prince Valiant at the Pink Elephant says, “I’m not going to bust my ass for anybody, I don’t even bust my ass for myself,” it is safe to say he does not believe that “hard work is a virtue and a duty.”)

We may keep using the phrase Protestant Ethic—everybody does—but for the record we should now split Protestant from Ethic. We call it that because Max Weber called it that in one of the classic works of political economics, and the sociologists and political economists are still sending students to the paperback stores for Max Weber, and not just for *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. The textile families of northern France—Catholics all—sent letters to their sons, and to each other, that could have gone right into *Die Protestantische Ethik*. Weber did not say, of course, that Protestantism was the sole cause of capitalism. In his commentary on Weber, Julien Freund says that *The Protestant Ethic* was at least in part a reaction against Marx’s solely economic motive. Embryo capitalism had existed in

other societies—Babylonian, Indian, Chinese, and Roman—but the “spirit” of capitalism developed only with the mystery-less, magic-free character of Protestantism, with its rationality and rationalization. The accompanying asceticism of Protestantism said that you worked hard in your calling to succeed—a sign of election by God—but did not spend the wealth created, because only sobriety pleased God. “Thus the Puritan came to accumulate capital without cease.”

Talk about industry, thrift, and the way to salvation, the Protestant Ethic has found its happiest current home in a very non-Protestant country—at least in name—Japan. A while back, on a visit, I would ask people in Japan: how much vacation do you take a year? And the answers would come back: two days, one day, three days. Why so little? Well, if you work on your vacation you get paid more, and the beaches are too crowded anyway. And I remember sitting cross-legged with the translator of my own book, himself the distinguished director of the Bank of Japan, a sliver of raw fish poised between his chopsticks.

“In the 1960s,” said the honorable director, “our total output passed Italy, France, Germany, and England; at this rate we will pass the USSR in 1979. How? Our people save twenty percent of their wages. No other country saves so much. In the United States it is closer to six percent.”

It is indeed, and when sour years come and the people clutch a little and the savings rate goes up to 8 percent, the President gathers his economic advisers to Camp David and wants to know what the hell is wrong with the consumer, how do we get him to loosen up?

“Of course,” said the director’s research assistant, “we will not pass the United States until . . .” and everybody stopped talking because that was not courteous.

“Sometime in the 1990s,” said the director, “and many things could happen by then: we have social overhead building up.”

“But we have done this without resources, without oil, without surplus food,” said the assistant, “with industry and thrift, industry and thrift.”

(The voices in Osaka rise to haunt the finite-earth model builders, in the morning alma mater:

For the building of a new Japan
Let’s put our strength and minds together,
Doing our best to promote production,
Sending our goods to the people of the world,
Endlessly and continuously,
Like water gushing from a fountain.
Grow, industry, grow, grow, grow!
Harmony and Sincerity!
Matsushita Electric! Matsushita Electric!

Someday we may have such technology that whether people work hard or not is marginal, but meanwhile there has been a lot of talk about alienation and unhappiness and the Blue-Collar Blues and, for that matter, the White-Collar Blues. Industry notices this because of absenteeism, turnover, and the lack of candidates for foreman, but at bottom nobody really *knows*. I suspect that two things are true in this country. One is that there are certainly a lot of jobs that are boring, not built to the human spirit or the human body, or not fulfilling in some other way, and that most of American industry is only beginning to pay attention to this. The second is that people like to work, as opposed to not working or hanging around the house. They like to work, or at least they like to go to the place where work is, because they see their friends, they have a beer afterward or a coffee break during, and it gets them into motion, and anyway we have not developed the tradition of playing the lute and counting that as a good afternoon. Given any degree of pleasantness, encouragement, and satisfaction, they would go to work even without the exhortations of the Ethic.

It is almost axiomatic in the literature of work that part of the problem comes from bending the men to the machines. But computers are machines, too; the pay may be less than that around nonelectronic machinery; yet the blues are not heard so much from this sector, and among the differences may be style, atmosphere, and air conditioning.

How hard, or with what care, people work is something else. William H. Whyte, Jr., and the other observers of the fifties, told us of the crossover: the executives were working the seventy-hour week and taking work home while the blue-collar hours were decreasing.

The difference is that both the executive and the blue-collar worker are now conscious of *options* that heretofore they did not think they had. Conscious only, for relatively few have acted on the alternative; behavior and attitude do not necessarily go immediately together. Most of the attention has been paid to the younger generation; at least the future executives were thinking about a balanced life, and the corporations were getting a bit more shy about telling them how demanding corporate life was going to be. Whatever the terrors that haunted the Man in the Gray Flannel Suit—not Making It, not having the House in the Suburb—the terrors do not have quite the intensity that they used to. The terrors are also less for the industrial workers. Back to the Ford memo:

Because they are unfamiliar with the harsh economic facts of earlier years, [new workers] have little regard for the consequences if they take a day or two off.

That's about as succinct as one can be. The harsh economic facts of earlier years were an unpleasant but effective motivator. You do not even have to have gone through a Great Depression yourself, if you heard enough talk about it while you were growing up. Now it has been more than thirty years since the end of the Great Depression, and not only do the Prince Valiants in the plant not know about it, they have not even heard that much about it because granddad does not live with them.

So: our productivity curve begins to flatten because we are becoming a service economy, and because some of the motivations—the spirit and the fear—have gone out of the producers. And maybe our inflation is persistent. If you want the dank side of it, some of the workers retire right there on the job and wait for their pension, some take Fridays off. The servicing of all our *things* (and indeed even the services themselves) becomes so erratic and sloppy that the manufacturers have to work to make them service-free, no checkup for ten thousand miles, and the consumers get so irritated they transfer that irritation into political channels and gladly accept more government regulation of business.

So: it is affluence itself that has taken the edge off our edge. But the President need not exhort us to get out and return to the honesty of a day's work for a day's pay, which he has done on several occasions. Nation Number One will not be unique, because these elements don't stop at the water's edge; at different times, but for the same reasons, they will take place in all the Western industrial countries. The exhortations of Chairman Mao may be to a different end than those of Cotton Mather, but the tone is the same. In the capitalist industrial countries, it is the first generation off the farm that provides the longest hours and the most uncomplaining workers. Somebody who has spent sixteen hours a day looking at the wrong end of an ox for sub-subsistence on a patch in Poland may not complain at all when he emigrates with a paper suitcase to a steel mill on the south side of Chicago, but his grandson may not think it is that good a deal. We are the furthest off the farm. Japan had a generation that made its industrial reputation; those glee-club singers in the Matsushita plant think Matsushita is about the most dazzling thing that ever happened, but meanwhile the Germans are using Turks and Spaniards—again, fresher from the farm—to fill out the ranks in the Volkswagen plants. All of which does not solve our problem, but gives us company.

Perhaps that just gives us a challenge. Adolph Berle, among his other activities, was coauthor with

Gardiner Means of the granddaddy classic in all this line of thinking, *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*. In one of his later books, *The American Economic Republic*, Berle suggested that we had a flexibility of response which he called the Transcendental Margin, those qualities that accounted for the prosperity of Israel but not Iraq, of the Netherlands but not Bulgaria—a certain creative energy. It propelled our system not toward profits but toward—are you ready—beauty and truth. In a younger and more optimistic America that did not seem so strange. If we still have it, or something like it, it should be possible to make of work something fulfilling that does not need either spiritual exhortation or economic fear to motivate it. That is a tall order and a big challenge, but the luckier of our citizens who have experienced something like it know that under those propitious circumstances it can be fun to bust your ass.

We ignore revolutions at our peril. Current evidences may or may not lead to profound changes, but we know that even when changes seem to happen quickly, the ideas behind them have been hanging in the air for a long time. Our man at the desk considering how goes the world, had he been in the city of London in 1913, would have been one of the prince merchants of the world: to him for capital came the Moscow Power and Light Company, the breweries of Bohemia, the trolley lines of Shanghai, the apples of Tasmania, the oil of Mexico, the ranches of Texas and Arizona, the tin mines of Malaya, the hemp of Tanganyika, and the railroads of absolutely everywhere. Half a century later our man was still at his desk and still at work, a bit shabbier, but his role and the world had changed.

At this point the image is going to fade away, because revolutions do not come neatly across a desk; if the change is profound enough, the frame through which we have looked at this scene will go away, and the desk and the chair will still be there but nobody will be sitting at them, as in a Magritte painting.

But once again, a degree of skepticism is in order. In going through an inordinate amount of the literature, for example, I found one phrase a number of times: "Our youth is in revolt." The writer is a verbal, conceptual person, usually an academic, and what he means is "my graduate students are in revolt"; or, my students have just worked their way through some Marcuse and they have had it with the System. The faculty of engineering is not so prompt to report that the students are in revolt.

This is not at all to write off small numbers of people. They may have a symbolic value to every-

body else articulating what larger numbers feel. But I think it is important to distinguish the flavor of what has been done: greenhouse people have reported on greenhouse people, which is to say that academics and book writers have talked about students, who may not end up being greenhouse people, protected from the storms and freezes of life, but who are in a stage of life—being at school—where they are protected from what shapes everybody else. Just the simple *numbers* have gotten so much bigger. Twenty-five students here and there do not make the impact that a "counterculture" of a million makes, but that million-strong counterculture is possible because of a trillion-dollar economy and, among other things, a student population of eight million. When everybody has to spend sixteen hours a day behind an ox, there is no counterculture.

Obviously I would not have taken this time and space if I thought we were still at July 4, 1955, in the Eisenhower Regency. Obviously, in spite of the looseness of the ways in which we have learned, Something Else Is Going On.

We don't have to look very far for a prime example of the causes of a suspicion of logic, rationality, and objectivity. Where did all those bright people get us, anyway? Weren't McGeorge Bundy and Robert McNamara two of the smartest people walking around? If we do not stop the Communists in Vietnam, they will think we are chicken, they will take over Asia, and so on. We analyze the problem. We will send x numbers of men, we will drop y numbers of millions of tons of bombs. Every day our television screens will carry the body-count report: *Them*, 5357, *Us*, 422. *Villages pacified today*: 324. The next day the score is the same, and the next. They see the score and we see the score. Therefore we win the war and achieve our principles, and the Communists will learn the lesson. It is all there, measured, in what social scientist Daniel Yankelovich has called the McNamara fallacy:

The first step is to measure whatever can be easily measured. This is okay as far as it goes. The second step is to disregard that which can't be measured or give it an arbitrary quantitative value. This is artificial and misleading. The third step is to presume that what can't be measured easily really isn't very important. This is blindness. The fourth step is to say that what can't be easily measured really doesn't exist. This is suicide.

Thus the use of feeling, emotions, ritual, and magic by the unconscious revolutionaries, as a rebellion. Charles Reich in *The Greening of America*:

Accepted patterns of thought must be broken: what is considered "rational thought" must be opposed by

The moral code which accompanied the accumulation of capital for the past several hundred years has encouraged us to applaud and honor what Keynes called “animal spirits.”

“nonrational thought”—drug-thought, mysticism, impulses. Of course the latter kinds of thought are not really “nonrational” at all; they merely introduce new elements into the sterile, rigid, outworn “rationality” that prevails today.

That is the *real* end of the Protestant Ethic—not only everybody stoned, man, but the end of the *rationality* that led to the burgeoning of capitalism.

Max Weber, one of the founders of sociology, whose phrase gave us the melody for this sonata, and who was the masterful historian of rationalism, wondered whether all the secularization and rationalism would not strip life of its mystery, charm, and meaning.

But obviously—and obviously is admittedly a rational adverb—the complex technological society is not going to go away. Some small numbers of people may try to go away from it, to manage on communes with *The Last Whole Earth Catalog* as a textbook. (I wouldn’t knock that, and I found myself inordinately tickled to have a book of mine included in the catalog among the kerosene lamps and potter’s wheels.) The rest of us are left to cope, to try to reintegrate what is missing into what we have. We can use a seeming-rational approach to try to assess, for our own rational and managerial ends, what the changes in ethic and spirit mean, but to accept totally a non-rational world is to say good-bye to our role.

Changes do not occur overnight. The moral code which accompanied the accumulation of capital for the past several hundred years has encouraged us to applaud and honor what Keynes called “animal spirits . . . a spontaneous urge to action rather than inaction”—and purposiveness. In his remarkable and extraordinary essay, “The Economic Possibilities for Our Grandchildren,” Keynes wrote:

Purposiveness means that we are more concerned with the remote future results of our actions than with their own quality or their immediate effects on our own environment. The “purposive” man is always trying to secure a spurious and delusive immortality for his acts by pushing his interest in them forward into time. He does not love his cat, but his cat’s kittens, nor, in truth, the kittens, but only the kittens’ kittens, and so on forward for ever to the end of cat-dom. For him jam is not jam unless it is a case of jam tomorrow and never jam today. Thus by pushing his jam always forward into the future, he strives to secure for his act of boiling it an immortality.

It may be that the era of purposiveness, with its inherent dictum of sacrifice, is winding down, however slowly. That does not mean another era of something else is immediately at hand. The counterculture may not be a proper guide to the future because it is defined by its opposition; it is easier to describe what it is against than what it is for. But it may serve to stimulate some sort of synthesis, to make us broaden the idea of what is “rational,” to help crack the consensus. Long before the term counterculture came to be bandied, Keynes had delineated the lopsidedness of the accumulative society. “We have been trained too long to strive,” he said, “and not to enjoy.” Perhaps in a hundred years, he wrote—a hundred years from 1931, that is—the chief problem of mankind would be to live agreeably and wisely and well.

What would bring us to that point? Science and compound interest, incremental technology and accruing wealth. Some of the members of our affluent and postaffluent society are already into that spirit, as we have seen.

But alas, our views of both science and compound interest are changing. Science is no longer the unmitigated good the late Victorians saw, the radio added to Pasteur added to the electric light added to the steam engine. There is even some doubt about how incremental scientific growth is. In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, Thomas Kuhn argues that each generation of scientists rewrites its textbooks to make everything a continuous flow. And as for compound interest—well, Keynes did say, in a phrase usually overlooked, “assuming no important wars and no important increase in population.” Compound interest does not solve our economic problems if population compounds faster, because *per capita* is our divisor.

Unexpected turns in the road do have a way of materializing; it was only a generation ago that some of our industrial societies were worried about how to get the birth rate *up*. If we could indeed count on the cushion of science and compound interest, then indeed we could look forward to the day when (Keynes again) “there will be great changes in the code of morals. . . . All kinds of social customs and economic practices, affecting the distribution of wealth and of economic reward and penalties, which we now maintain at all costs, however distasteful and unjust they may be in themselves, because they are tremendously useful in the promoting of the accumulation of capital, we shall then be free, at last, to discard.”

But what do we do on Monday morning? □

HOW THE ECONOMY WENT HAYWIRE

by David Halberstam

When the bill came due for the Vietnam War, someone had to pay it, and keep paying.

In 1954 General Matthew Ridgway, Army Chief of Staff, had carefully programmed exactly what would be needed to fight the Viet Minh and to help the French in Indochina. The cost for one year would be an estimated \$3.5 billion. President Eisenhower thereupon called in his economic advisers and Secretary of the Treasury George Humphrey. "George, what would all this do to the budget?" he asked. Humphrey thought for a few moments and then gave a quick answer: "It'll mean a deficit, Mr. President." In a way, thought one man present at the meeting, any idea of intervening in Indochina died at that moment.

By 1965 war had not become any less costly, particularly a war whose principal architects felt it could all be accomplished by expensive technology and modern military machinery, a war part of whose purpose was to spare Western, if not Asian, lives, a war in which the most expensive new helicopters replaced tanks. So the cost of the war became one more public relations problem for President Lyndon Johnson. The full dimensions of the American commitment could be kept partially secret from the press and the Congress and the allies. But eventually someone had to pay for it, and in the very process of the payment, some of the plans, projections, and realities had to become public.

Early in 1965 the Joint Chiefs of Staff were pushing for special funding for the war, knowing that it

would be expensive; and knowing that the more open the Johnson Administration was about funding the war, the more open it was likely to be in admitting to the nation that it was, in fact, at war. The Chiefs wanted a program which would include traditional wartime budgetary procedures—invariably meaning higher taxes—and they lost that fight in July, 1965, when President Johnson decided to go ahead and make it open-ended, without announcing how open the end was. As a result, even at that point—when one might have expected, by checking defense expenditure projections, to find an honest assessment of what the war would cost—the reverse was true. In his attempt to keep the planning for the war as secret as possible, Lyndon Johnson did not give accurate economic projections, did not ask for a necessary tax raise, and did in fact direct *his own* military planners to be less than candid with *his own* economic planners, a lack of candor so convincing that his economic advisers later felt that Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara had seriously misled them about projections and estimates.

The reasons for Johnson's unwillingness to be straightforward about the financing were familiar. He was hoping that the worst would not come true, that it would remain a short war, and he feared that if the true economic cost of the war became publicly known, he would lose his Great Society programs. The result was that his economic planning was a living lie, and his Administration took us into economic chaos: the Great Society programs were passed but never funded on any large scale; the war itself ran into severe budgetary problems (the decision in 1968

**The President, who had sliced everything so thin,
decided he would slice this one, too: he would hold
back on the real estimates of the cost of the war.**

to put a ceiling on the number of American troops in Vietnam was as much economic as political); and most important, the failure to finance the war honestly inspired a virulent inflationary spiral which helped defeat Johnson himself. Seven years after the commitment of combat troops, that inflation was still very much alive and was forcing the Nixon Administration into radical, desperate economic measures in order to restore some financial balance.

In the spring of 1965 the economy had already reached the point of overheating, and some of the President's economic advisers were worried about inflationary dangers, even without the prospect of a major war. After years of high unemployment, the level had dropped close to the target of 4 percent. Now, with a war in sight, the economic advisers were even more uneasy. Johnson and McNamara were implying that it would not be a big war, but there were already rumblings in the early fall of 1965 from people on Capitol Hill that it was likely to become a very big war. The rumbling came from men like Senator John Stennis (D., Mississippi) and Representative Mendel Rivers (D., South Carolina), who estimated that the cost for fiscal 1966, which ended in June, 1966, would be about \$10 billion. The Administration was denying this, and at that time Johnson had fairly good credibility. He had claimed in the past year that he intended to cut back defense spending, and although Rivers and others contradicted him, lo and behold, the President *had* cut defense spending. Later it would turn out that Stennis and Rivers knew quite well what they were talking about, since they were privy to the most secret of the back-channel military messages through their close liaisons with General William Westmoreland and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Thus they had a very good idea of what Westmoreland was asking for and what McNamara had promised him—which made it a big war. Based on this, Stennis and Rivers were claiming that the war would cost about \$10 billion by the year ending in July, 1966. That figure was of course far above the estimates coming from the White House (in his July messages Johnson had talked about a projected figure of only \$2 billion above the estimated Defense Department budget).

The projections coming from Capitol Hill upset Gardner Ackley, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. He did not really believe them, but he wanted guidance from the White House, and assurance that his own forecast was accurate. With his estimates projected at a maximum cost of \$3 billion to \$5 billion, Ackley wanted to say in a forthcoming speech that anyone using the figure of \$10 billion

was operating on a figment of his imagination. Encouraged by the Administration to answer these critics, Ackley decided to clear the speech with McNamara, who assured him that the cost would be relatively low, nowhere near \$10 billion. So Ackley went ahead with his estimates. Unfortunately the final figure for the year was about \$8 billion, far closer to the Stennis-Rivers estimates than to the McNamara estimates.

But that was a marginal miscalculation compared to what was in store. The Council of Economic Advisers became more and more uneasy about the direction of the war; they felt they had been looking quite good as economic advisers recently and they wanted to keep it that way. The economy was going full blast, everyone seemed to have more money than ever, prosperity was everywhere—even the very poor were about to be let into the mainstream of American life. *Time* magazine had just put John Maynard Keynes on its cover. So the Council was up and the members wanted to stay up; they thought the time had come to slow the economy down, to turn down, or turn off, the faucet, particularly because of the problem of rising costs at the Department of Defense. With an overheated economy already on hand, and a war and major domestic legislation just ahead, they thought it was time to move for a tax increase. On December 10, 1965, they sent a message to the President to that effect, basing their demand for more taxes on the growing needs for the war and the additional domestic requirements. In Ackley's opinion there was a sense of urgency at the time; he believed that this was the kind of situation which could easily get out of control. In addition, he felt that war estimates were always faulty, the needs always greater than the projections.

The President seemed somewhat receptive to the idea of the tax increase, but did not seem to share Ackley's sense of urgency. Ackley was telling the President he could not have three things: the war, the Great Society, and no inflation. If he wanted all three, then he would need a tax increase. But if this was obvious to Ackley, it was not so obvious to Lyndon Johnson. The President feared that if he went to the Congress for the tax increase he might lose control of this delicate series of maneuvers. The Congress, Johnson told friends, would give him the war, but not the Great Society. So the President, who had sliced everything so thin, decided he would slice this one, too: he would hold back on the real estimates of the cost of the war for a year—perhaps major expenditures would not be necessary after all, perhaps Hanoi would fold. Meanwhile he would push very hard to get the Great Society legislation through by early 1966, and once it was passed, he would concen-

One part of the government was lying to another part.

trate on the war. Thus by the time the extent of the involvement in Vietnam was fully apparent, the Great Society would already be a fact.

"I don't know much about economics," he told friends, "but I do know the Congress. And I can get the Great Society through right now—this is a golden time. We've got a good Congress and I'm the right President and I can do it. But if I talk about the cost of the war, the Great Society won't go through and the tax bill won't go through. Old Wilbur Mills will sit down there and he'll thank me kindly and send me back my Great Society, and then he'll tell me that they'll be glad to spend whatever we need for the war."

The President knew he was cornered and he decided to negotiate what he wanted, piece by piece, as stealthily as possible. Now there were three sets of players, each acting independently of each other: the military, who wanted major financing for what they had been told was a major war; Johnson's domestic aides, who were pushing for the Great Society and who knew relatively little about the extent of the military planning (they were encouraged by the President to know as little as possible); and Johnson's economic planners, who sensed the potential of the conflicts involved but did not know the extent to which decisions on military troop levels had already been made.

The key man in all this was Robert McNamara. The Great Society projections were relatively public, and the rest of the budget was stable. It was the military projections which were based on secret information and private decisions—secret, it turned out, even to the President's own economists. In December, 1965, McNamara began drawing up the plans for the military budget for fiscal 1967, a budget which would run from the middle of 1966 to the middle of 1967 and which would go to the Congress in January, 1966. By this time he had already consulted with Westmoreland and had his darkest fears confirmed—Hanoi was reinforcing at a faster rate than we were; it would be a large war, and quite likely a long one. Westmoreland's July, 1965, estimates that we would need only 300,000 troops by the end of 1966 had been discarded; the approved figure was now 400,000 Americans by the end of 1966, and a probable figure of 600,000 by the end of 1967. Yet in constructing the budget, McNamara made the arbitrary assumption that the war would be over by June 30, 1967. It was in direct contradiction to the estimates he was getting from Westmoreland (and in direct contradiction to his own private estimates for Johnson at the time), but it was a plausible assumption for planning. McNamara wanted the cutoff date left in because in Korea we had fought an open-ended war

and consequently too much military equipment had been bought, and he wanted to avoid a repetition. McNamara was telling the President at this point that he could not guarantee the length of the war, but that it would be the most economically fought war in history. That he would guarantee—he would really ride herd on the military.

McNamara placed the cost of the war at \$10 billion for the fiscal 1967 budget. Thus Johnson would be able to propose significant increases in Great Society programs, administer the war, and—thanks to the normally rising revenues natural to a growing economy—still show only a minor deficit. It looked like the work of a great magician-economist, but it was really only a shell game. A magician who lied. The economic experts and critics who sensed that there was a built-in dilemma looked at the budget searching for the hole and found to their surprise that the hole did not exist; it was all acceptable. The problem, they knew, was the war, but there was Bob McNamara promising to keep it at \$10 billion, and he told the President, but he did not tell the public or the Congress, that he was putting the cost of the war between \$15 billion and \$17 billion.

For the first time, there were memos on the subject in the bureaucracy, though not for the public; they were private memos, of course, and they were sent over to the Council of Economic Advisers with the notation: "For internal use only." Since the Council was already becoming very skeptical about the whole thing, Arthur Okun, one of its members, noted in the margin: "But not to be swallowed." At this point the Council began meeting with McNamara, pushing him hard to get a more exact estimate of the cost of the war and to get him to move for a tax increase. But they found McNamara, usually so sure, usually so filled with certitudes, very reluctant to come down with a hard figure for the cost of the war, and he gave three figures: high, low, and medium. The high was \$17 billion (or \$7 billion over the original estimate), the medium was \$15 billion, the low was \$11 billion. Eventually the figure came to \$21 billion, which meant that even his own private re-estimate for a medium increase was off more than 100 percent, and his estimate for the general public was off even more. McNamara was not, it turned out, quite so good a manager as he had claimed, nor was his machine quite so efficient, though this did not necessarily make him any more modest. Indeed, a few months later, in discussing the forthcoming budget, he said, "Never before has this country been able to field and support in combat so large a force in so short a time over so great a distance, without calling up the reserves, and without applying price, wage, and material controls to our civilian economy."

It was at this point, in March, 1966, under increasing pressure from the Council of Economic Advisers to move for a tax increase—a modest one, 3 or 4 percent—that the President took his first tentative step. Tentative is the word. He was still worried about his domestic programs, and he was wary of revealing what he was up to overall. Though he knew by now that the military costs were going to be greater than the estimates in the budget revealed, he kept them to himself. Instead, he summoned key businessmen and members of the House Ways and Means Committee in separate meetings and asked them if he should move for a tax increase. He did not (and this was crucial) tell them how much the war was going to cost. Thus they were asked to give estimates and projections on a step as important as a tax increase based on totally erroneous information. It was an extraordinary bit of manipulation; indeed, said Edwin Dale, the economic correspondent of the *New York Times* in Washington, it was the single most irresponsible act by an American President in the fifteen years that he had covered Washington.

Naturally, acting on this limited information, both the businessmen and the congressmen told Johnson not to move for the tax increase; this in turn permitted the President to go back to his economic advisers and tell them that he had discussed a tax increase with the congressional leaders and they were all totally opposed, he could get no votes for it. One part of the government was lying to another part. Thus was the fatal decision made not to move for a tax increase, a decision made in early 1966 which resulted in the subsequent runaway inflation.

In the end, instead of being marginal, as predicted officially, the deficit for fiscal 1967 turned out to be a whopping \$9.8 billion. Meanwhile, through early 1966, McNamara kept meeting with the Council of Economic Advisers, and the Council kept pressing him to go for a tax increase. McNamara, however, kept pleading that he did not want to—in fact, could not—go along. He did not have a firm figure on the war, he said, and they would have to trust him. In addition, he insisted the Congress would hang him if he went up there, hang him twice. They would hang him on the war, and hang him on the financing of it. Of course the real reason he did not want to go and testify, it soon became clear, was that open testimony on how deep we were in and how much deeper we were going would have been equivalent to a formal announcement on the size and duration of the war, which was the last announcement the Administration wanted to make at that point.

So in the early months of 1966, when the planning and budgeting for the next year were in process, the Johnson Administration did not move for a tax in-

crease. Nor did it admit that the projected cutoff date for the war of July 1, 1967, was an illusion. It did give up the idea within the Administration itself early in 1966. Much later, in November, 1966, McNamara admitted publicly that the idea of the cutoff date had been dropped and that since the war would continue to go on, the financing would have to be greatly increased. When McNamara did make the announcement, Edwin Dale of the *Times* wrote an analysis of the decision, and noted that doubling of spending on the war; the article naturally angered McNamara, who felt it cast doubt upon his reputation as a war manager. So he called Dale to say, with no small amount of irritation, that they had abandoned that assumption early on. Very early on, he said. And Dale answered, "Yes, sir, I know you did, and I know why you did, but you didn't tell us publicly until now." A minor point, of course.

As it became increasingly obvious that the war in the budget and the war in reality were two separate things, doubters and critics began to surface. In mid-1966 the economist Eliot Janeway, asked by senators to comment on the funding of the war, estimated that instead of the monthly drain of \$800 million proclaimed by the Administration, the real drain was closer to \$2 billion a month, and might go as high as \$3 billion. This did not endear Janeway to the President, who set out to silence future critics of his arithmetic.

In May, 1967, Ralph Lazarus, president of the Federated Department Stores and vice-chairman of the Business Council, held a press conference and publicly criticized Johnson's war budget. He estimated that government spending on the war for the next fiscal year would be about \$5 billion higher than the government estimate of \$21.9 billion. He was immediately telephoned by no less an economic authority than Justice Abe Fortas, who asked Lazarus to tone down his estimates because they were inaccurate; indeed, Lazarus had upset the President very much with his erroneous projections. Unfortunately the war cost figure turned out to be \$26.5 billion, which meant that Lazarus hit it almost on the nose. And the government's deficit was an almost parallel \$23 billion.

In effect, the Johnson Administration went to war without really coming to terms with it, and paid for the war without announcing it or admitting it. They faked it. They barely got through the first year, but even the first year saw the start of the inflation, and it became more virulent month by month, finally almost a living part of the economy, and the political impact of the inflation became almost as

serious a political issue in 1968 as the war itself.

The Administration slipped by in fiscal 1966, but by fiscal 1967 things were getting worse, with the deficit almost \$10 billion, but the deficit for fiscal 1968 was worse still. In late 1966 the Council of Economic Advisers continued to put pressure on Johnson for a tax increase, and by January, 1967, they found him far more amenable to their demand, largely because he already had pushed most of his Great Society legislation through Congress, and having less to lose, felt himself less vulnerable. In the January, 1967, budget message the President proposed an income-tax surcharge but with no date for congressional enactment, and in July the Council of Economic Advisers told him to go for it. In August he sent a message to the Congress. Chairman Wilbur Mills of the House Ways and Means Committee read it, made some suggestions, held some hearings, and took his time with it. By mid-1967 Johnson was no longer the awesome figure of 1965 who could force anything through the Congress as quickly as he wanted.

Now that Johnson was ready for the tax increase, the Congress was not. It took a great deal of negotiating between the Congress and the White House before the surcharge bill was passed in July of 1968. It was, of course, all too late: the deficit for fiscal 1968 was \$27 billion. As managers of the economy, the Administration's top officials were turning out to be something less than their press clippings implied. The inflation was full-blown; the country was bitterly divided. Cities, hospitals, and schools found themselves caught in destructive, hopeless labor disputes growing out of the inflation. The irony of it all was that the cost of the war itself was not enough to destroy the economy; it never cost more than 3.5 percent of the gross national product, and there were never any real shortages. It was not the war which destroyed the economy, but the essentially dishonest way in which it was handled.

In late 1967 General Westmoreland made a request for additional troops. When it came in, the White House sent it to the Council of Economic Advisers for a reading on what its economic consequences would be. It was the first time Johnson had ever done this, and the Council was very pleased to render its quite negative findings, though there was a general feeling that it was all very late.

Similarly, in late 1967 Tom Wicker of the *New York Times* stopped in to interview Robert McNamara. When the subject of the miscalculation

of the cost of the war came up, McNamara dismissed it in a casual way which shocked Wicker by its cynicism. "Do you really think that if I had estimated the cost of the war correctly, Congress would have given any more for schools and housing?" he asked. Implicit in what McNamara was saying, it seemed to Wicker, was that Congress would have given anything necessary for the war and very little for domestic legislation, so the Administration might just as well lie. Wicker left totally appalled by the conversation. □

ST. ANTONY OF PADUA

Love, when you lost your keepsake,
The green-eyed silver serpent,
And called upon St. Antony

To fetch it back again,
The fact was that such keepsakes
Must never become idols
And meddle with the magic

That chains us with its chain:
Indeed the tears it cost you
By sliding from your finger
Was Antony's admonishment

That magic must remain
Dependent on no silver ring
Nor serpent's emerald eyes
But equally unalterable,

Acceptable and plain . . .
Yet none the less St. Antony
(A blessing on his honesty!)
Proved merciful to you and me
And found that ring again.

by Robert Graves

THE LAST LAUGH

by Fernando Krahn



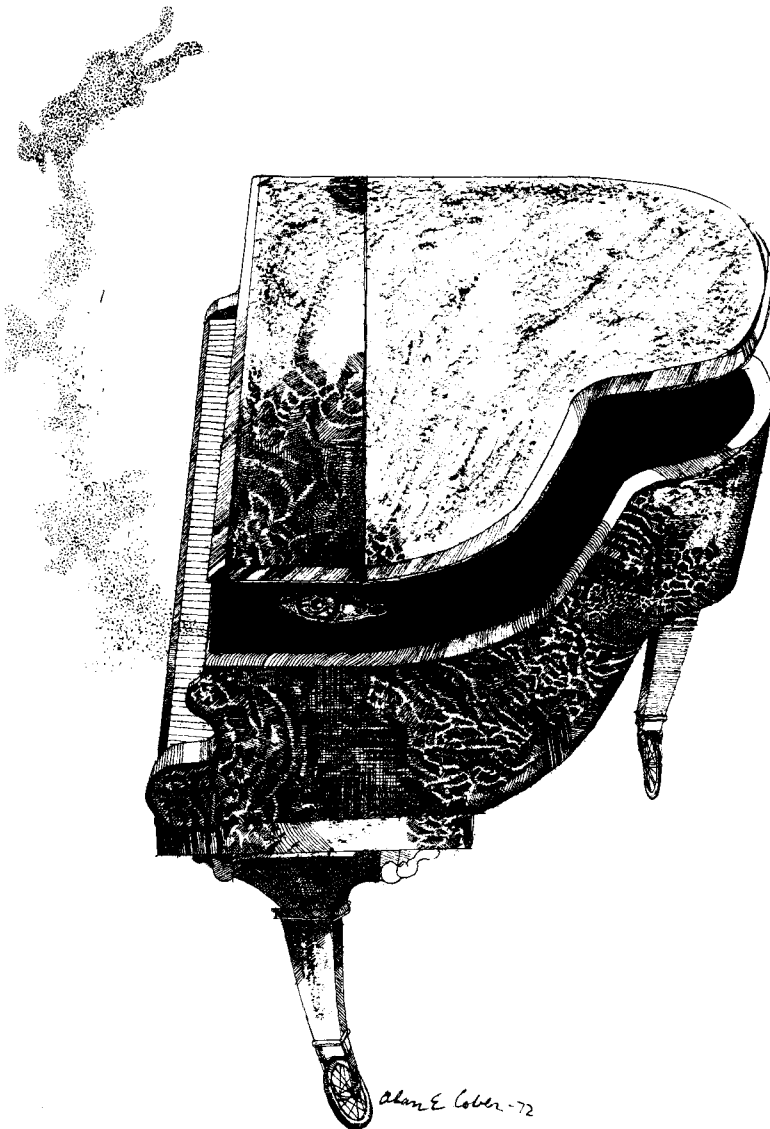
THE SANDMAN

A story by Donald Barthelme

Dear Dr. Pepper, I realize that it is probably wrong to write a letter to one's girlfriend's shrink but there are several things at issue here that I think ought to be pointed out to you. I thought of making a personal visit but the situation then, as I'm sure you understand, would be completely untenable—I would be *visiting a psychiatrist*. I also understand that in writing to you I am in some sense interfering with the process but you don't have to discuss with Susan what I have said. Please consider this an "eyes only" letter. Please think of it as personal and confidential.

You must be aware, first, that because Susan is my girlfriend pretty much everything she discusses with you she also discusses with me. She tells me what she said and what you said. We have been seeing each other for about six months now and I am pretty familiar with her story, or stories. Similarly, with your responses, or at least the general pattern. I know, for example, that my habit of referring to you as "the sandman" annoys you, but let me assure you that I mean nothing unpleasant by it. It is simply a nickname. The reference is to the old rhyme: "Sea-sand does the sandman bring / Sleep to end the day / He dusts the children's eyes with sand / And steals their dreams away." (This is a variant; there are other versions, but this is the one I prefer.) I also understand that you are a little bit shaky because the prestige of analysis is now, as I'm sure you know far better than I, at a nadir. This must tend to make you nervous and who can blame you? One always tends to get a little bit shook when one's methodology is in question. Of course! (By the bye, let me say that I am very pleased that you are one of the ones that talk, instead of just sitting there. I think that's a good thing, an excellent thing, I congratulate you.)

To the point. I fully understand that Susan's wish to terminate with you and buy a piano instead has



disturbed you. You have every right to be disturbed and to say that she is not electing the proper course, that what she says conceals something else, that she is evading reality, etc., etc. Go ahead. But there is one possibility here that you might be, just might be, missing. Which is that she means it.

Susan says: "I want to buy a piano."

You think: "She wishes to terminate the analysis and escape into the piano."

Or: "Yes, it is true that her father wanted her to be a concert pianist and that she studied for twelve years with Goetzmann. But she does not really want to reopen that can of maggots. She wants me to disapprove."

Or: "Having failed to achieve a career as a concert pianist, she wishes to fail again. She is now too old to achieve the original objective. The spontaneous organization of defeat!"

Or: "She is flirting again."

Or:

Or:

Or:

Or:

The one thing you cannot consider, by the nature of your training and of the discipline itself, is that she really might want to terminate the analysis and buy a piano. That the piano might be more necessary and valuable to her than the analysis.¹

What we really have to consider here is the locus of hope. Does hope reside in the analysis or rather in the piano? As a shrink rather than a piano salesman you would naturally tend to opt for the analysis. But there are differences. The piano salesman can stand behind his product; you, unfortunately, cannot. A Steinway is a known quantity, whereas an analysis can succeed or fail. I don't reproach you for this, I simply note it. (An interesting question: Why do laymen feel such a desire to, in plain language, fuck over shrinks? As I am doing here, in a sense? I don't mean hostility in the psychoanalytic encounter, I mean in general. This is an interesting phenomenon and should be investigated by somebody.)

It might be useful if I gave you a little taste of my own experience of analysis. I only went five or six times. Dr. Behring was a tall thin man who never said anything much. If you could get a "What comes to mind?" out of him you were doing splendidly. There was a little incident that is, perhaps, illustrative. I went for my hour one day and told him about something I was worried about. (I was then working for a newspaper down in Texas.) There was a story that four black teen-agers had come across a little white boy, about ten, in a vacant lot, sodomized him repeatedly, and then put him inside a refrigerator and closed the door (this was before they had that requirement that abandoned refrigerators had to have

their doors removed) and he suffocated. I don't know to this day what actually happened, but the cops had picked up *some* black kids and were reportedly beating the shit out of them in an effort to make them confess. I was not on the police run at that time but one of the police reporters told me about it and I told Dr. Behring. A good liberal, he grew white with anger and said what was I doing about it? It was the first time he had talked. So I was shaken—it hadn't occurred to me that I was required to do something about it, he was right—and after I left I called my then sister-in-law, who was at that time secretary to a city councilman. As you can imagine, such a position is a very powerful one—the councilmen are mostly off making business deals and the executive secretaries run the office—and she got on to the chief of police with an inquiry as to what was going on and if there was any police brutality involved and if so, how much. The case was a very sensational one, you see; *Ebony* had a writer down there trying to cover it but he couldn't get in to see the boys and the cops had roughed him up some; they couldn't understand at that time that there could be such a thing as a black reporter. They understood that they had to be a little careful with the white reporters, but a black reporter was beyond them. But my sister-in-law threw her weight (her councilman's weight) around a bit and suggested to the chief that if there was a serious amount of brutality going on the cops had better stop it, because there was too much outside interest in the case and it would be extremely bad PR if this got out. I also called a guy I knew pretty high up in the sheriff's office and suggested that *he* suggest to his colleagues that they cool it. I hinted at unspeakable political urgencies and he picked it up. The sheriff's department was separate from the police department but they both operated out of the courthouse building and they interacted quite a bit, in the normal course. So the long and short of it was that the cops decided to show the four black kids at a press conference to demonstrate that they weren't really beat all to rags, and that took place at four in the afternoon. I went and the kids looked OK, except for one whose teeth were out and who the cops said had fallen down the stairs. Well, we all know the falling-down-the-stairs story but the point was the *degree* of mishandling and it was clear that the kids had not been half killed by the cops, as the rumor stated. They were walking and talking naturally, although scared to death, as who would not be? There weren't any TV pictures because the newspaper people always pulled out the plugs of the TV people, at important moments, in those days—it was a standard thing. Now while I admit it sounds callous to be talking about the degree of brutality being minimal, let me tell you that it was no small matter, in that time and place, to force the cops to show the kids to the press at all. It was an achievement, of sorts. So about eight o'clock I called Dr. Behring at home, I hope interrupting his supper, and told him that the kids were OK, rela-

¹For an admirable discussion of this sort of communication failure and many other matters of interest see Percy, "Toward a Triadic Theory of Meaning," *Psychiatry*, vol. 35 (February 1972): 6-14 *et seq.*

tively, and he said that was fine, he was glad to hear it. They were later nobilled and I stopped seeing him. That was my experience of analysis and that it may have left me a little sour, I freely grant. Allow for this bias.

To continue. I take exception to your remark that Susan's "openness" is a form of voyeurism. This remark interested me for a while, until I thought about it. Voyeurism I take to be an eroticized expression of curiosity whose chief phenomenological characteristic is the distance maintained between the voyeur and the object. The tension between the desire to draw near the object and the necessity to maintain the distance becomes a libidinous energy nondischarge, which is what the voyeur seeks.² The tension. But your remark indicates, in my opinion, a radical misreading of the problem. Susan's "openness"—a willingness of the heart, if you will allow such a term, is not at all comparable to the activities of the voyeur. Susan draws near. Distance is not her thing—not by a long chalk. Frequently, as you know, she gets burned, but she always tries again. What is operating here, I suggest, is an attempt on your part to "stabilize" Susan's behavior in reference to a state of affairs that you feel should obtain. Susan gets married and lives happily ever after. Or: There is within Susan a certain amount of creativity which should be liberated and actualized. Susan becomes an artist and lives happily ever after.

But your norms are, I suggest, skewing your view of the problem, and very badly.

Let us take the first case. You reason: If Susan is happy or at least functioning in the present state of affairs (that is, moving from man to man as a silver dollar moves from hand to hand), then why is she seeing a shrink? Something is wrong. New behavior is indicated. Susan is to get married and live happily ever after. May I offer another view? That is, that "seeing a shrink" might be precisely a maneuver in a situation in which Susan *does not want* to get married and live happily ever after? That getting married and living happily ever after might be, for Susan, the worst of fates, and that in order to validate her nonacceptance of this norm she defines herself to herself as shrink-needing? That you are actually certifying the behavior which you seek to change? (When she says to you that she's not shrinkable, you should listen.)

Perhaps, Dr. Pepper, my logic is feeble, perhaps my intuitions are frail. It is, God knows, a complex and difficult question. Your perception that Susan is an artist of some kind *in potentia* is, I think, an acute one. But the proposition, "Susan becomes an artist and lives happily ever after," is ridiculous. (I realize that I am couching the proposition in such terms—"happily ever after"—that it is ridiculous on the face of it, but there is ridiculousness piled upon ridicu-

lousness.) Let me point out, if it has escaped your notice, that what an artist does is fail. Any reading of the literature³ (I mean the theory of artistic creation), however summary, will persuade you instantly that the paradigmatic artistic experience is that of failure. The actualization fails to meet, equal, the intuition. There is something "out there" which cannot be brought "here." This is standard. I don't mean bad artists, I mean good artists. There is no such thing as a "successful artist" (except, of course, in worldly terms). The proposition should read, "Susan becomes an artist and lives unhappily ever after." This is the case. Don't be deceived.

What I am saying is that the therapy of choice is not clear. I deeply sympathize. You have a dilemma.

I ask you to note, by the way, that Susan's is not a seeking after instant gratification as dealt out by so-called encounter or sensitivity groups, nude marathons, or dope. None of this is what is going down. "Joy" is not Susan's bag. I praise her for seeking out you rather than getting involved with any of this other garbage. Her forte, I would suggest, is mind, and if there are games being played they are being conducted with taste, decorum, and some amount of intellectual rigor. Not-bad games. When I take Susan out to dinner she does not order chocolate-covered ants, even if they are on the menu. (Have you, by the way, tried Alfredo's, at the corner of Bank and Hudson Streets? It's wonderful.) (Parenthetically, the problem of analysts sleeping with their patients is well known and I understand that Susan has been routinely seducing you—a reflex, she can't help it—throughout the analysis. I understand that there is a new splinter group of therapists, behaviorists of some kind, who take this to be some kind of ethic? Is this true? Does this mean that they do it only when they want to, or whether they want to or not? At a dinner party the other evening a lady analyst was saying that three cases of this kind had recently come to her attention and she seemed to think that this was rather a lot. The problem of maintaining mentorship is, as we know, not easy. I think you have done very well in this regard, and God knows it must have been difficult, given those skirts Susan wears that unbutton up to the crotch and which she routinely leaves unbuttoned to the third button.)

Am I wandering too much for you? Bear with me. The world is waiting for the sunrise.

We are left, I submit, with the problem of her depressions. They are, I agree, terrible. Your idea that I am not "supportive" enough is, I think, wrong. I have found, as a practical matter, that the best thing to do is just to do ordinary things, read the newspaper, for example, or watch basketball, or wash the dishes. That seems to allow her to come out of it better than any amount of so-called "support." (About the *chasmus hystericus* or hysterical yawning—I don't

²See, for example, Straus, "Shame as a Historiological Problem," in *Phenomenological Psychology* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p. 219.

³Especially, perhaps, Ehrenzweig, *The Hidden Order of Art* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1967), pp. 234-239.

worry anymore. It is masking behavior, of course, but after all, you must allow us our tics. The world is waiting for the sunrise.) What do you do with a patient who finds the world unsatisfactory? The world *is* unsatisfactory; only a fool would deny it. I realize that your own ongoing psychic structuralization is still going on—you are thirty-seven and I am forty-one—but you must be old enough by now to realize that shit is shit. Susan's perception that America has somehow got hold of the greed ethic and that the greed ethic has turned America into a tidy little hell is not, I think, wrong. What do you do with such a perception? Apply Band-Aids, I suppose. About her depressions, I wouldn't do anything. I'd leave them alone. Put on a record.⁴

Let me tell you a story.

⁴For example, Harrison, "Wah Wah," Apple Records, STCH 639, side 1, track 3.

One night we were at her place, about 3 A.M., and this man called, another lover, quite a well-known musician who is very good, very fast—a good man. He asked Susan, "Is he there?" meaning me, and she said, "Yes," and he said, "What are you doing?" and she said, "What do you think?" and he said, "When will you be finished?" and she said, "Never." Are you, doctor dear, in a position to appreciate the magnificence of this word, in this context?

What I am saying is that Susan is wonderful. *As is*. There are not so many things around to which that word can be accurately applied. Therefore I must view your efforts to improve her with, let us say, a certain amount of ambivalence. If this makes me a negative factor in the analysis, so be it. I will be a negative factor until the cows come home, and cheerfully. I can't help it, doctor, I am voting for the piano.

With best wishes,

POEM FOR JEAN TINGUELY

I am haunted by all the fatigues of metal—

by the weary flexing of the Boeing's wings
until they tuck and it drops like an anchor—
by the brave little shutters that cock and blink
until something breaks and they stare through the exquisite
lenses in a permanent time-exposure—
by the clattering fuel-pump in my car, overwrought, doomed—
by all motors everywhere in fact, surging
through the night, invisibly wasting their own valves,
rings, bearings to bright grit in the oilsumps—
by the pathos of new machines being lifted from crates,
the terrible first turning-over of moving parts—

I can't help it, I don't trust metal
but I sympathize with it deeply.

Simple hinges and nightlocks have actually
worn out in my lifetime, opening and closing;
once before marriage I dreamed that for hours in a Torture
Test I was made to screw and unscrew a bolt
and a nut, until they lost their grip on each other
and slipped through each other like strangers—

and now I sit here under the rusty knees
of a bridge groaning with traffic,
listening to the thin percussions of my wristwatch,
tensing the babbitt in my joints,
sucking on a twig of copper wire.

by Jarold Ramsey

BRAVE NEW MARRIAGE

by Melvin Maddocks

If sensory overload isn't the answer, how about diffused sensuality-sexuality and constant feedback and re-evaluation within a flexible process philosophy?

Who can help knowing by heart the myth of the American marriage? For those with a taste for metamorphosis, the standard scenario goes like this:

Romeo and Juliet are alive and well in a Westchester suburb—\$60,000 English Tudor house with real crushed sea shells in the driveway. Despite early marriage and two children (a boy for him, a girl for her), R. has managed to acquire a college degree and a \$27,000-a-year job with a New York life insurance company as an actuary, an absolute genius at double indemnity. He is in his late thirties and slightly gone to paunch: waistline expanding, hairline receding. After three drinks tiny red veins appear on his cheeks. The boy who used to climb balconies now commutes on what is left of the New Haven Railroad, solving the crossword puzzle in the *New York Times*.

Juliet is still slim but severe, almost knife-edge, wearing the slightly vengeful look of a woman to whom all-night lovemaking is an event of the past—about fifteen years past. She is forever frantically smoothing things down: her hair, her furniture, her husband and children. If R. is going soft, J. is going hard; and both are turning sour. They have Made It, and so what? The passionate lovers have become sick-and-tired dialecticians. What they do now until the lark sings is argue.

At this point in the familiar scenario two endings become available to scriptwriters:

Option A: One perfectly tip-top spring afternoon while strolling through Rockefeller Center, Romeo meets Rosaline again (or Juliet meets Mercutio—that boy always had a certain something), and the trusty old heart cries: "I married the wrong woman!" or "I married the wrong man!" as the case may be.

Option B: One dark night Romeo Jr., thirteen, almost dies during an appendectomy. The next morning R. and J., haggard but hyper-alive with relief,

take a second cup of coffee under the rose arbor. The Westchester sky is memorably blue. Juliet Jr., ten, followed by her beagle, Friar Laurence, comes running to Mummy with a single flawless tulip in her hands, and Mummy thinks: "This is all there is, and it's enough."

In either option, the moral stays the same: marriage is Right, but people can be Wrong. When people "grow up," when they find out who they really are and what they really want, they learn this.

How suddenly quaint the premise sounds today! When R. and J. '72 glare across their pillows at three o'clock in the morning, her punch line is no longer, "I married the wrong man," but, "I married." Period. And there's no nonsense about "This-is-all-there-is-and-it's-enough." The line now reads: "This is all there is? It's *not* enough."

The same Americans who all these years blamed their bad marriages on themselves, now, if they seem less than happy or good, blame themselves on marriage. *Is marriage really necessary?* At one time only Bohemians and socialists—people like that—asked the question. Now it has become the property of the middle class: the people who twenty years ago talked about togetherness; the people who ten years ago thought once you had *her* orgasm straightened out, that was that; the people who faithfully kept saying that marriage has its ups and downs and, you know, it's a compromise and you have to work at it but, taken all in all, it's still the best shot at happiness. These are the people who are now saying, "Marriage is hell"—and maybe the hell with it. It is "as obsolete as the piston-engine plane." It is "the triumph of hypocrisy." It is "a ghetto of lunacy." Suddenly priests seem to be the only people left who really want to get married. In effect, a new myth of American marriage is being written with a credo that goes more or less like this:

Brave Old Monogamy was serviceable in its day: on the frontier certainly and probably for as long as America was "agrarian." But the "nuclear" family loses its social and economic advantages in an "urban-industrial" culture.

Furthermore, marriage suits Americans less and less as a psychological arrangement. Monogamous expectations are badly out of line with man's (and

woman's) sexual nature. The marriage contract—the very word is repulsive—has become a false and punitive convention. “Holy matrimony” is no longer a sacrament but a “piece of paper,” a contradiction in terms: legalized love.

Marriage has become one of those antiquated institutions—another dirty word—that bricks people in. They are forced to play out obsolescent “roles,” neglecting their own self-interest. Indeed they are not allowed to “be themselves.” Condemned, before they start, to boredom and resentment, they are also doomed in a reprehensible number of instances to divorce.

A whole new genre—a kind of Brave New Marriage Lit.—has been invented to confirm the disenchantment with traditional monogamy and to codify the new “alternatives.” As with most movements of piquant discontent today, the generous impulse of Brave New Marriage Lit. is to “liberate” men and women not only from their actual traps but from their “hang-ups” too. Brave New Marriage Lit. is the seventies equivalent of Norman Vincent Peale or Dale Carnegie: it is here to *help*. How? Consider *Open Marriage: A New Life Style for Couples* (Evans, \$6.95) by Nena and George O’Neill. In the political spectrum of Brave New Marriage, the O’Neills are liberals rather than radicals. They are for small mercies: extending the permissible boundaries of proper conduct, raising the ratio of pleasure to sacrifice without disturbing the conscience. They want to ease the general strain by semantics, by redefinition.

Noting the increased life-span of today’s couples—to say nothing of their accelerated capacity for using up experience—Brave New Marriage moderates like Margaret Mead have protested that “till death do us part” is getting to be an awfully long time. As a first small mercy the moderates proposed “serial monogamy.” Liberals like the O’Neills have moved one step beyond this “pluralism”—in-sequence. Protesting that Brave Old Monogamy or “closed” marriage means “rigid role behavior,” “excessive togetherness,” and “possessiveness,” they advise pluralism with marriage—“a little additional sharing,” as they put it.

Does “open” marriage include adultery? The O’Neills are anxious to play down the question. With anthropologists’ detachment they indicate that adultery is “another option that you may or may not choose to explore.” In redefining fidelity with kindly vagueness as “commitment to your own growth, equal commitment to your partner’s growth,” they are, to all intents, granting the sort of under-the-counter permission to extramarital sex that “situation ethics” moralists granted to premarital sex a decade ago.

The O’Neills see the need of their constituency as gratification with honor. Reconcilers of the new and

old moralities, they do their best to demonstrate that ecstasy and self-improvement are often the same thing. Their thesis can be read as a compassionate resolution of Freud’s dilemma: that civilization has been “built up upon a renunciation of instinct.”

The O’Neill school of Brave New Marriage Lit. belongs to what is loosely referred to as the sexual revolution. Another school of compassion takes its direction from another revolution: Women’s Liberation. If the assumption of the O’Neills is that marriage forces couples to do an injustice to nature, the assumption of Jessie Bernard is that marriage forces partners to do an injustice to each other—particularly the husband to the wife. “Being married,” she states in *The Future of Marriage* (World, \$9.95), “is only half as good for wives as for husbands.” As a frankly partisan sociologist she sees her mission to “reorient the public’s thinking.”

All the options get chalked on the blackboard: traditional nuclear family; serial monogamy; communes and cooperative households; short-term contracts; ménage à trois; group marriage; swinging; even celibate marriage. At the bottom, Dr. Bernard prints in block letters—underlined until the chalk breaks—her own opinion: “Needed: new social spectacles.” Then she asks her pointed question: what will these “alternatives” do for women? She is not at all sure; the book ends under the caption: “No final conclusion.”

The New Woman, she does suppose, will avoid “sensory overload”—that is, sex is not the solution. Rather, the answer is “personhood,” and “temporarily permanent” relationships may best lead to “personhood.” At any rate, the New Woman will not describe herself as “married.” Perhaps “pair-bound” will do. “Once we have words for the new statuses,” Dr. Bernard writes, with at least as much goodwill as naïveté, “we can clarify their nature.”

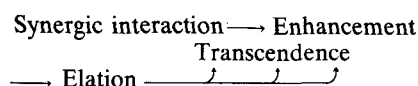
All these are reasonable and humane objectives as stated; one is tempted to say that the chief motive of the Brave New Marriage author is to relieve suffering. So far, the new “alternatives” under scrutiny are just that: practical solutions designed for specific problems. If this were all there was to Brave New Marriage, it would be just another case of American pragmatism: a few inspirational mottoes and a lot of intuitive tinkering. But beneath the conspicuous common sense there is concealed an astonishing ideology—at times, virtually a secular vision of salvation—which threatens to set up an equally romantic myth to replace the one it has rejected. Its metaphysics may be paraphrased as follows:

Man is innocent—or at least lovers are. All they need is their freedom. The restrictions that frustrate them also corrupt them, making them feel anxious, guilty, and causing them to behave vengefully toward one another.

Sexual love is a benign act. “Make love, not war”—meaning, as long as you’re making love, you will never make war. The lover is man at his purest-in-

heart; allow him his pleasure, and his “hang-ups” and “hostility” will disappear. (Freud may be parenthetically recalled here to voice his dissent. Though he stipulated that civilization was built upon “renunciation of instinct,” he went on to say that if we were to allow “complete freedom of sexual life, thus abolishing the family, the germ-cell of civilization, we cannot, it is true, easily foresee what new paths the development of civilization could take; but one thing we can expect, and that is that this indestructible feature of human nature [aggressiveness] will follow it there.”)

With graphic little arrows the O’Neills diagram the promises of Brave New Marriage:



These promises may be as extravagant, as perfectionist as any promises in the history of marriage, and that, as the O’Neills would be the first to point out, is saying a lot. What does the pie in the sky cost? Little more than the courage to throw off your chains, to “be yourself.” Or so the manifestos read in bold type.

Alas, nothing exposes more mercilessly the romanticism of Brave New Marriage than a comparison of its bargain price tag with its hidden costs. In exchange for releasing poor harassed humans from the harsh injunctions of monogamy, Brave New Marriage—without apparently noticing the fact—imposes even more exacting imperatives. Examine the fine print in this casually worded rule for “pluralism” drafted by the O’Neills: “If partners in an open marriage do have outside sexual relationships, it is on the basis of their own internal relationship—that is, because they have experienced mature love, have real trust, and are able to expand themselves, to love and enjoy others and to bring that love and pleasure back into their marriage, without jealousy.”

In other words: thou shalt not be possessive; thou shalt not be jealous; thou shalt not object to thy planned obsolescence; and so on—commandments that by contrast make “thou shalt not commit adultery” look like rolling off a log.

Brave Old Monogamy called for rather ordinary virtues—principally patience. Brave New Marriage, under the advertisement of reducing expectation, calls for a sort of Renaissance man of the heart, with apparently unlimited time and energy, the balance of a tightrope walker, and the tact of a diplomat.

If taken seriously, the ideology of Brave New Marriage could produce anxieties at least as onerous as sexual guilt. They already have, if one believes the advance frontiersmen (or more often frontierswomen) in places like the *Village Voice* who are turning their dissatisfaction with the new “alternatives” into a confessional art form. “Sex, yes. Lots of

sex, more than ever,” reports one self-styled “casualty of the sex war.” But, Karen Durbin gloomily continues, it all “seems bleak and a little dead. A year or so ago, so much seemed possible, and even if it didn’t seem possible, the try itself was worth making. New worlds were going to be forged. New men, new women, free of sex roles and competition, free of all the sexual levers that a sick, aggressive society had manipulated us with. Now here we are. . . . Society doesn’t have to manipulate us, we can manipulate ourselves.”

Then there is Kathrin Perutz, another agonized New Woman, writing practically in blood. As her title indicates—*Marriage Is Hell* (Morrow, \$5.95)—she is as down on Brave Old Monogamy as anybody else, and more vehemently, more personally so. Yet a reader could imagine her composing a sequel: *Brave New Marriage Is Hell Too*. For she is half in rebellion against her own rebellion.

She points out what is cruel in the New Freedom: this leaving everything up to “each individual.” Speaking of herself as lost in “a sea of alternatives,” she complains: “We are given choice and conflict, but not the means to resolve either.” Nor does she like the fact that “it’s become unusual for an ambitious woman to admit great joy in her child. Why should a ‘liberated’ woman feel that deep love for her child is somehow ignominious?” She is discontented with the plans for accommodating children to Brave New Marriage by theorists reporting on the good word from the kibbutzim, or by Germaine Greer, recommending that one have one’s child, then quite literally farm out the little him or her to an Italian peasant family.

What makes “emancipated” people like Karen Durbin and Kathrin Perutz look Brave New Marriage’s gift horses (freedom, pleasure, a serene conscience) so querulously in the face? Perhaps a self-preserving sense that each individual, each generation can afford just so many investments in hope. But perhaps, too, a hunch that Brave New Marriage prophets have less control over their prophecy than they imagine.

Futurologists, for all their lip service to naturalness and spontaneity, tend to be bureaucrats at heart. They are looking for what T. S. Eliot once called a system so perfect that no one will have to be good. And so, in the end, Jessie Bernard wonders if a “national family policy” might not make things easier all around. “Policy in the future,” she writes, “is going to make it possible for more and more people to achieve good marriages. . . . The shape of the distribution of happiness in marriage will change; the mode will shift to the right. It will be possible for people to be as unhappy as in the past; but fewer will be.” In short, the marriage of the guaranteed minimum: freedom and innocence gently nudged along by the “social engineer,” supervised no doubt by a U.S. Department of Pair-Bound Relations.

Robert Francoeur, in *Eve’s New Rib: Twenty Faces*

Brave New Marriage

of *Sex, Marriage, and Family* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, \$6.50), goes so far as to suggest that the options he is enumerating will produce "a new world for mankind"—if not indeed a new mankind.

Every ideology earns its embodiment. Medieval Christianity has the Gothic cathedral. American business has the skyscraper. If the reader trusts Dr. Francoeur, *Brave New Marriage* has the Sandstone Foundation for Community Systems Research north of Los Angeles.

"It is impossible," Dr. Francoeur cries, "to verbalize the realities of the diffused, low-keyed, 'McLuhanesque cool' sensuality-sexuality which permeates the Sandstone community." But he tries.

The physical design of the SFCSR is late-period Hugh Hefner. The main building features a hundred-foot plush-carpeted living room with a mammoth womb of a fireplace; an enormous buffet dining room; and a paneled lounge with strobes and colored lights that illuminate a pool table, a bar, and water beds. Off the lounge is a "cozy" room with wall-to-wall mattresses. Nearby there awaits an indoor swimming pool, warmed to body temperature.

What is happening at that bar, in that ninety-nine-degree swimming pool, on those water beds? "Feed-back and constant re-evaluation within a basic but flexible process philosophy."

Here at last we may have arrived in a blaze of jargon at what the signals are all about: philosophy—though not necessarily "flexible process" philosophy. The quarrel over *Brave New Marriage* is a quarrel over *Brave New World*. Sexual ethics—the comic debates of reluctant prudes versus determined lechers—are the least of it. What is happiness? What even is pleasure? What—dare one say it—is *real*? These are the ridiculously portentous questions that keep worrying their way into a reader's mind. Along with that other question: *Do these people know?*

It makes a mad scene, begging for satire—but melancholy satire. Two armed camps of sentimentalists—the future people and the past people—dispute whether they are talking about a dream or a nightmare. On the one hand, mod prophets are running to keep up with their own Zeitgeist; on the other hand, Cassandras warning (about two hundred years too late) against the "deauthorization" of Western civilization. And in the middle: just plain sad, complicated people with people's sad, complicated needs.

A final prediction:

The future people demanding change, more change, are getting to be like those back-seat fanatics in Keystone Kops chase scenes whose lips shape screams of "Faster! Faster!" as the steering wheel comes loose and the tires fall off. Even without their help marriage in America is moving at superspeed.

The will to condemn has gone out of society in the matter of divorce and abortion, and these changes in attitude are slowly being legalized. ("No-fault" divorce laws will come close to sanctioning "serial monogamy.")

People don't lose their jobs or even their "reputations" because of adultery, though they may lose their reputations now by indulging in too much chastity. Sexual varietism, including homosexuality, is "understood" to death.

In practice, moderate *Brave New Marriage* is here, and the ideologues shouting "Repression!" are fighting a battle largely won. The real danger is that, out of their excesses of utopian zeal, they may change a quite tolerable equilibrium into something worse. To paraphrase Santayana, those who don't know their puritanism are condemned to repeat it. If the *Brave New Marriage*-makers were dealing with tennis instead of marriage, they would listen to the curses of the players, then sympathetically solve the problem by lowering the net and stipulating "limited and temporary" base lines. They leave their players relieved of all special demands but also near that intolerable point where total freedom becomes total responsibility. You *must* do whatever you think you want to—this last imperative of American puritanism is likely to prove the harshest as well as the most impossible ideal of all.

A final scenario:

Don't look now, but who is that trim and tanned couple in the Sandstone corner, he nicely slimmed down, she nicely rounded out? Paddling in the pool, feeding back and re-evaluating like mad, are R. and J. in their latest metamorphosis. In *Brave New World*, Huxley visualized another Shakespearean character—Edmund in *King Lear*—"sitting in a pneumatic chair, with his arm around a girl's waist, sucking away at his sex-hormone chewing-gum and looking at the feelies."

Let us imagine one last three-o'clock-in-the-morning dialogue. R. and J., as part of their "flexible process philosophy" program, have been reading *Romeo and Juliet* aloud. Now it is "personhood"-assessment time for Shakespeare and, of course, for them. R. rolls over on their water bed with a squish and begins:

"God, all that morbidity. Love and self-sacrifice and *death*. I mean, Shakespeare's really perverse."

"It's as if suffering *meant* something, as if unhappiness were a civil right," J. agrees. "But sometimes a sort of—you know—bell rings, and I almost think I get what he's saying . . ."

"Time to swim," R. interrupts brusquely, waking Rosaline on the next mattress. With J. holding one hand and Rosaline the other, he takes the plunge. The ninety-nine-degree blandness dissolves the odd tweak of distress their conversation had given him. He has a sudden, grateful impulse to explain how right, how honest, how—well—moral it is to arrange life as pleasantly as possible. But he can't find the words, so he only says:

"This beats climbing balconies."

And, of course, when you look at it one way, it really does. □

TWO MEN

Arthur Fog was a hermit and lived under a dead elm in a ruinous inherited house with chicken wire on the windows. Old, bent, and crazy, he argued furiously with himself in the street, and sent elegant letters to the paper, favoring change. Legend said as a boy he had been tied to the railroad tracks until a train came in sight, an experience that marred his mind. Another story said he studied too much in college and came home cracked. He wore overalls made from the white and green striped awning that once shaded the sidewalk in front of the five-and-ten. A rope around the waist and over his shoulder held them up. He was dirty, sober, and deaf as Beethoven. Rumored to carry a gun,

he never shot anyone. Billy's mother, who took in lodgers, told us he was a rich miser; she was indignant because the butcher gave him bones. He had no teeth, was half blind, and on hot days covered his hairless head with a red handkerchief tied at the corners. He had no plumbing, or none that worked, and emptied his pail in the river. In winter he wore a path through the snow, down the bank, to a rock at the black water, and burned rubber tires in his stove for warmth. The stink annoyed the neighbors, who grumbled to one another but did nothing, expecting him to die every day. He did not work, nor was he ever idle, and even in the rain he trudged up and down the town, salvaging refuse from the river. The pile behind his house made a senseless list: logs, rusted iron, a cane, bottles, buoys, boots, a mirror, a mattress, a sack of drowned pets, rungs of a ladder, rags, the leavings of the tide. I never knew what it meant. He did not arrange, store, preserve, sell, use, repair, fondle, or gloat over his acquisitions, but simply went back to the river for more.

My parents called him "a poor pathetic," but I thought him heroic and unwillingly helped snowball him once. We followed him home in the freezing dusk, hitting his back. At his padlocked door he turned but couldn't see us. Snowballs splattered around him and he put his head back and raised both fists, and the dogs that he never let out raved like wolves within.

I didn't hear when he died. I came home one Thanksgiving to find his house gone and the foundation filled in. The next time I came, sown grass covered the place. The rotting elm remained.

* * *

Willy Wallace drank and loved the world. He had a red sly face and a tireless tongue. He stood by the bridge and stopped people to announce the arrival of his yacht and invite them for a ride. Some avoided,



An Atlantic "First"

by R. D. Skillings

ignored, or humored him, and some called him a goddamned fool. Once in a while he washed windows on Commercial Street. No matter how drunk he was he went on talking about his yacht, and he always left the glass invisible.

"You're a good workman, Willy," my father said to him one noon, handing him a dollar. We were on our way home to lunch. I had been learning to make out the monthly bills, and I was embarrassed because I had on a coat and tie.

"Wouldn't want folks not to see in," Willy said.

"Or out," my father said.

"My yacht's coming today," Willy said, picking up his squeegee, pole, and pail. "I'd like to give you a ride."

"What time?" my father said.

"Oh, about two," Willy said.

"Business hours, I'm afraid," my father said, "though it's kind of you to offer."

"Someday you'll get your ride," he said to me, and his eyes narrowed and his nose glowed.

"Thank you," I said.

His yacht was huge and white, had many sails but no motor, and was manned by mute Russians. This was infuriating to some.

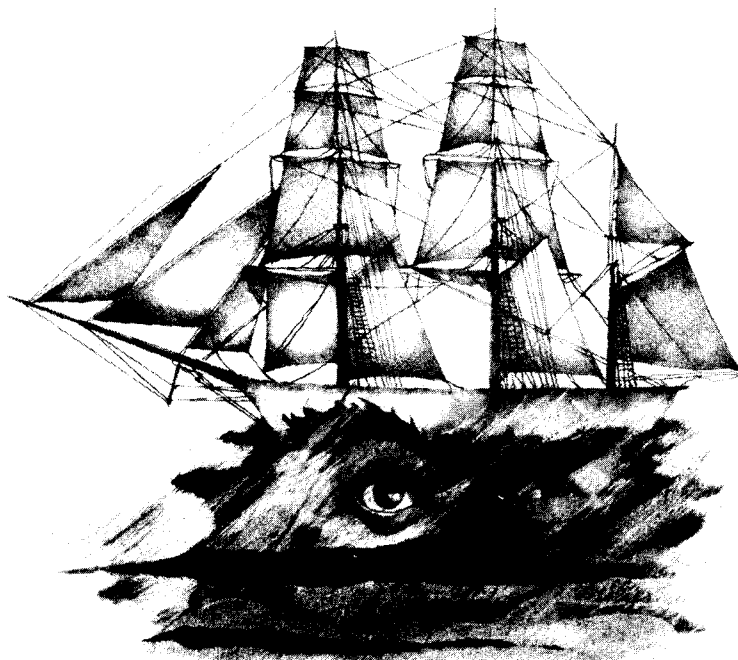
"Hey, Willy, where's your yacht?" one might yell from the bar of the Hoover House. "It was spose to be here yesterday."

Willy Wallace would admit he had just received a report of bad weather at sea. She'd had to put in to port, but she'd come today for sure. They'd all go for a ride and eat caviar and drink champagne. There was room for everyone. Then he would apologize for the delay.

Men with memories reminded him his yacht had been due every day for twenty years, yet no one had ever seen it. Talk of time merely made Willy Wallace smile, for his yacht was about to arrive. He described it in detail, year after year, using the same words, as if it were real. Logicians asked if he had to beg

tobacco and booze, how could he pay the crew? They worked for nothing, he answered, and wind was free. Cynics said he was a charlatan and lived a lie for gain, like the blind who saw and the lame that ran.

Willy Wallace didn't care what anyone thought. He drank and talked, watching the gulls drift down the river, and now and again he would lean out from the last stool and with one finger wipe a speck from the window. Many tried, but none could annul the yacht of Willy Wallace, and when he died, a kind of rancor outlived pity and fear among his cronies at the Hoover House, as though he had escaped the just, common fate. □





NOTES FROM AN ITALIAN HILL TOWN

by Linda Arking

"I know it's rugged, but we make a living from the marble, there are stones to build with, and we can always eat the chestnuts."

Terrinca sprawls across a hillside, halfway up from the flat green coast bordered by the blue Tyrrhenian, to a white mountain peak. It's from this peak of solid marble that the town takes its bearings; the people here are quarriers. So the men aren't joking when they say they have had a hand in shaping their mountain; literally, they've been hacking away at it for centuries. And the mountainside in turn has helped shape the town.

Layout, for example. Terrinca, taking advantage of a natural ridge, spreads out horizontally across the face of the hillside, and is connected by a path to the highway above. You could say the highway runs slightly over the heads of the people. Behind the ridge, the town is a jumble of houses rising blocklike in tiers, propping each other up. Gray cobble streets twist and climb between them, flattening out into open piazzas, tumbling down into staircases to link different levels, or rising straight up to form the walls of a house. But whether walls, streets, or stairs, they are all built of stones—the same stones, now redistributed, that once lay strewn about the hill. By rearranging these stones into the shape of a town, the people have made the hillside livable.

Everything has a reason. Street stones, for example, were collected from the riverbed, already smoothed and rounded and comfortable for walking, whereas building stones were pried from the dry hillside, the most angular ones being used for corners. Then having built with stones, they decorated with

marble. Thick white slabs (brought down by the same men who'd hacked it blocklike from the quarries) were laid flat as doorsills—fine welcome mats. Narrow marble strips also encase the windows, the sills protruding from the house walls. On upper stories these sills serve as outdoor shelves for flower pots, and on the ground floor as benches for people chatting in the street.

The roofs—no mere thatch here—are made of terra-cotta tiles, mud having been collected from the same river that gave the street stones and baked in a kiln with its own red tile roof. Patches of wire mesh have been thrown over like nets to hold loose tiles together, and on the roof corners large stones sit as weights. Though the middle slopes are well forested with beech, fir, and chestnut (the Tuscan olive groves and grapevines gave out with the lowlands and the trees seem to grow taller with the altitude), they are valued for their fruit rather than lumber, so that wood, if used at all, appears in the form of flat boards—doors and shutters to cover holes in the wall.

In the center of town, in the largest piazza, into which all streets empty, is a carved stone fountain where the water is always running, fed by a mountain stream higher up. The other large piazza spreads low and flat before the church, which is built of stone, like the houses, but is splendidly faced with marble. Beyond is the cemetery, enclosed by walls and by a row of firs, whose dark, slender tips point higher than any tower. The church and cemetery stand at the western end of the ridge; beyond that is a drop. And in this arrangement, too, there is a natural propriety: the only place to go from there is down or up.

So much for constructions. If the town then is built of given materials, sticks and stones, to fit human

needs, its people, too, are nourished by things that are found here—secondary products, grown or contrived. “Terrinca,” in fact, is a contraction for *terra ricca*, rich earth (not rich like Tuscan farmland, but rich despite the underlying rock), and the houses behind the ridge are backed up to the highway by terraced garden plots growing the necessary greens. For the rest, a traveling salesman comes once a month.

Dry provisions and hardware are gathered into shops where they’re sold day by day, and not without ceremony. The shoemaker sits behind a table in an empty room—he needs no stock—and even the news dealer has a store to himself; when you buy a magazine, he rolls it up importantly and puts a rubber band around it. Local news, though, is more direct; a teen-aged town crier makes rounds every day, yelling out the winning village lottery numbers. Pink or blue ribbons are tacked up on front doors to proclaim a birth inside (this isn’t decoration; it’s necessary, since not everyone can read), while on other house walls posters with black borders announce deaths in the family. The posters are glued up as though they were billboards; what are being advertised are the facts of life.

The grocery store stocks animal feed as well, and sells odds and ends such as shoes. But since salt, like cigarettes, is a state monopoly, everyone knows to buy it only at the tobacconist’s. Another shop combines chestnuts and mushrooms—no coincidence, either, for the dark, moist underbrush of these rich chestnut forests is naturally suited to the growth of the mushrooms, which may be one reason why the trees are not cut down. Next door is the butcher, who stands above his marble counter on a high wooden platform, like an auctioneer. His shop, open only in the morning, is always crowded.

He can’t sell much beef, though. High above, it’s true, the wooded slopes give way to pasture (before it all gives way to rocky marble)—grazing land, in summer, for sheep and cattle. But again, as with the trees, they’re utilized mainly for what they bear: milk, rather than meat, and from that, cheese. Also, wool. This local wool accounts for the shirts on nearly everyone’s back and is used also as stuffing for winter mattresses.

In short, though Tuscany’s hill towns have been largely abandoned since World War II, losing their shepherds and farmers to factory jobs down in the cities, the men of Terrinca have stayed on up here. Their job is quarrying the mountain—that source won’t soon give out (about 700,000 tons of marble are extracted annually from the Apuan Alps). And though the pull down to the coast is already bringing changes, these people still live, basically, as they always have. They know what they need, and they use what they’ve got.

Fifty yards from the center is the town’s exit to the world outside—a footpath leading up to the two-lane highway, and the roadside establishment serving as the bar-pensione. Motorists would ride right by it,

but I had reason to stop there for several days recently while gathering research for a paper on the quarries. During my stay I was made to fit into the ordinary, everyday pattern of family life there.

From where I’m sitting—a covered terrace behind the house that overlooks the town—I can see the green garden plots dropping down in tiers before suddenly hardening into a scramble of rooftops. In a cabbage plot near the house stands *la nonna*, the family grandmother, named Isola, or island. As a teen-ager, fifty years ago, she was crowned princess at a festival. The title has stuck, in its way, for now she’s called Queen. It’s stuck, too, to her husband, who is often called King.

She’s not exactly regal; loud is more the word. She wears, over a flashy purple sweater, a matching purple housecoat, sporty canvas shoes with ripple soles, and antique gold pendant earrings. She says she bought the housecoat from the traveling salesman because it had big pockets.

She doesn’t talk; she yells—not in your ear, but in your whole face. “The spirit’s ever young!” she shouts through missing teeth. “Old age is in the mind, my heart’s a fountain of youth!”

She’s always yelling about love. “Ernesto and I,” she announces, “have been making love ever since 1923,” meaning that’s when they became officially engaged. She asks if I have a “loving one” somewhere. “Well, yes,” I say, “he’s an artist.” “Ah, well, no wonder!” Of her husband and their fifty-year marriage, she says, “How could I go wrong? All the boys were so poor then, you’d only marry them for love.”

She was poor, too, of course—though her parents had a cow, a richness permitted only on this middle, fertile slope. Each morning, as a girl, she’d walk uphill to Arni, another quarriers’ village six miles up, to sell the milk she carried in a pail on her head. The hardest part, she says, was walking through a tunnel, straight into blackness. To warn of her approach, she’d hold aloft in her left hand a length of wire, at the end of which she had stuck a clump of hemp doused with oil and lighted at the tunnel’s entrance. With her right hand she dragged a stick against the wall to feel her way, tapping.

“The kilometers I walked!” she boasts, unlamenting. “And not just on roads either; I mean whole hillsides! But it made the boys stronger, and the girls then were prettier . . . If only I’d had the clothes I have now.”

She had fallen ill once, at age nineteen, and had set about composing a summary of her life. It came out in the form of an epic poem—an oral one, since she’d never learned to read—forty-six verses and rhyming all the way. Half a century later, she fell ill again, so she added two verses and a dedication: To my bridegroom.

There’s no doubt of her recovery. This morning, in



fact, she got up at five to go hunting for mushrooms in the chestnut forests. You have to go so early because the light's clearer, people say. Ha! she says. It's not the light, it's your eyes!

Isola's husband, Ernesto, now retired, worked fifty years in the quarries. His father worked even longer, having started at age seven, but a new law made Ernesto finish third grade before he could begin work. When I move from the terrace to the marble bench in front of the house, he wanders over and stands silently beside me—more reflective in retirement than his wife. The spring air, he notes, is warm: "It's been a long time since you could take off your jacket in the shade."

I look up at him—a mild, thin man with laced boots, buttoned trousers, and, visible beneath his collar, a winter wool undershirt that probably stays on at night. He has brought two cushions: "You'll catch cold, sitting on bare marble when the air is so warm."

He's pleased to sit and chat—I would think so, after walking five miles to work for fifty years. He says he and the others used to leave the village before dawn and would follow literally, in single file, the paths of their fathers. By the time the sun rose they were already in the quarries and since they had to hack out as much marble as possible while the light lasted, they set out for home in the dark. "We slept home every night," he says, "but we only saw our children awake on Sunday."

They wore hobnailed boots—that was before ripple soles—and carried their lunches up the mountain with them: loaves of bread inside their shirts and leather pouches on strings, filled with dried chestnuts. There was nothing else to eat. "Just as well," he adds mildly. "You can't climb uphill, you know, if you're carrying packages, if your arms aren't free."

During the Depression, salaries remained low and to save rent in the village he moved with Isola and the baby Olga to a shepherd's stone hut on a slightly higher slope. It was the end of summer anyway, so the shepherds were coming down, and by trading on the way they arrived at the top with seven chickens, which gave them just enough eggs for the winter. Besides, they had the chestnuts. Half the village moved up there that year, and the women planted potatoes and rye. No one had tried using that land before.

He thinks a lot of this mountainside. "I know it's rugged, no place for horses or rolling vineyards. But we make a living from the marble, there are stones to build with, we can always eat the chestnuts—there's nothing you really have to throw away. There's rain in season, grass for sheep or cattle, trees of all sorts, plenty of water that never fails."

There's just one spot he calls completely useless: one particular peak that, as luck would have it, overhung the slope with the shepherd's hut and which they thus had to look at that whole, bad winter. It's invisible from here, but he says it's all gray, with no marble to quarry and no trees or grass either. Nor has it ever broken itself up naturally into small stones you could manage and use. For Ernesto's pur-

poses, it's plain dead weight. "We gave it a nickname—*il Pancione*, the Big Belly. You know, it just *sits* there."

Ernesto rolls a cigarette as he talks and lights it with matches struck on the stone chips he carries in his pocket.

His son-in-law speaks of the quarries as though they were uptown—a place of business; in fact, he drives there in his car. The road up was tarred only ten years ago, and Olivero has done his best to move along with it. He started as a quarrier, but then one day recruited three neighbors and approached the quarry owners as the official representative of the newly formed Workers' Cooperative of Terrinca. The plan was simply to forfeit their salaries, to rent quarry space, and to sell the marble on commission. It was his idea besides to build this pensione on the highway, single-handedly laying the floors in each of the four guest rooms with marble he had hauled down from the different quarries that he'd worked.

Olivero, even more than his teen-aged kids, sees the split between life in the new high-rise cities down on the coast and the old life up here. He's seen diesel trucks, loaded with huge marble blocks, roar down the same road his father-in-law climbed up on foot, and wondered perhaps about the lobbies with elevators that all the marble was headed for.

Yet he's as much a part of this place as his parents were, and if he builds for the future, he also builds to hold the past. Last evening, before sunset, he drove us all up—though we left the car where the road ended and walked the rest—to the same shepherd's hut where Ernesto and Isola lived that bad year. The hut belongs to them now, and by working on weekends Olivero has kept it in shape—shoring up the stone walls, repairing the slate roof, even building an alcove with a couple of bunk beds. Isola is growing roses where she once dug potatoes, and Olivero's daughter has painted flowers on the fireplace. Over the years, the hut has become a sort of family shrine, once fled to out of need, now retired to for pleasure. City people from the coast try to rent it for weekends, but Olivero refuses, he wants to keep it in the family. He's attached to this place, and he's devoted to his kids; he calls his daughter Santina, "little saint."

Like most of the men here, he moved off the mountainside for military service, but once that was over, he moved back. Ernesto had spent two war years in Africa; Olivero was stationed in Italy, in peacetime, but still decided that what he found was disconcertingly foreign. Olivero finished fifth grade, as required by the law passed after the war. Since then, the legal minimum has been pushed up to ninth, but naturally he wants his son and daughter to go further. This morning, I know, he took the day off and drove down to the coast to enroll his son in high school. He'll be trained as a *geometre*, a land surveyor, and with luck he'll get a job in quarry man-

Notes from an Italian Hill Town

agement; his sister wants to study languages and become an airline hostess. But this will present problems, for it means the two will have to commute by bus to Carrara or Massa every day. So Olivero worries about the three-hour bus trip, and wonders whether, for their sake, he oughtn't to move the whole family down there for good.

He'd rather not, though he can tell you Terrinca has lost fifteen families in a decade. "It'd be easier," he admits aloud, "at least for their schooling. But for someone like me, brought up little by little with sacrifice on all sides, and taught to use what I've got around me—well, I'd be *sad* to see how city people just throw things away. After all, they do most of their work on paper."

His wife, Olga, has inherited, has literally laid stake to the row of vegetable plots alongside her mother's. She also runs a small barnyard besides, and when the pensione isn't filled with upstairs guests, she uses the bed-making time to tend to the animals. This morning I stepped behind her, back down to their shed—a compartmentalized construction of wire mesh and wood, with a corrugated iron roof left behind during the war. She starts her routine with the bunnies and chicks, cleaning their cages and counting heads to see, as she says, if anything has happened during the night. Then she goes outside to scatter corn for the hens and greens for the rabbits, returning with an armful of cabbage leaves which she spreads out flat on top of the rabbit hutch. "Tomorrow," she explains, "the cabbage will have dried out. You can't feed it to them fresh because it's bad for their digestion." I remark how in America we seldom eat rabbit. Her offer is immediate: would I like this one for lunch? It's just my cellophane-wrapped city life that makes me start; here, it's clear where all things come from.

Nonplussed, in her housecoat, she starts the rounds of her truck farm, descending plot by plot down the terraced hillside, shopping for her menu, weeding, checking, and chatting all the time. When we reach the bottom, she has mentally worked out the ingredients for lunch and after an announcement—"We'll have minestrone!"—starts picking herbs and vegetables for soup on the way up, reaching out for them as I would to a supermarket shelf. One last snip at the top and she's got her parsley.

Is there a better place for ladies' gossip than in the kitchen, shelling beans? With the big bowl between us, she talks about her girlhood, most of which was overshadowed by the war. She remembers how the men then brewed coffee from acorns, and rolled cigarettes with the leaves from ears of corn. But mostly she remembers not having enough to eat. Retreating Germans, she says, took care of the livestock and Allied strafing from the air put the farm fields out of range, so for over three years these people on the hillside staved off starvation by living on chestnuts.

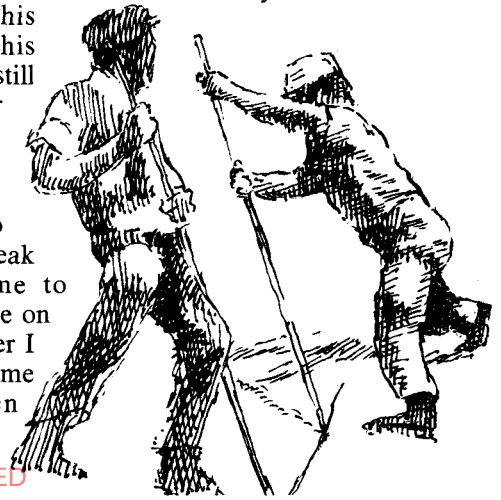
For morning porridge, they ground chestnuts up into polenta. They roasted chestnuts whole for snacks. For a main dish, they mashed chestnuts with oil, vinegar, and salt, and for dessert, they mashed chestnuts, again, with some sugar. As Olga says, it lends itself.

They would gather them in autumn, this manna from the earth, and haul them in baskets to a closed stone room where they'd spread them out on a perforated platform, below which was lighted a low charcoal fire (the charcoal itself made from chestnut roots and branches). The smoke that seeped up would slowly dry the chestnuts, and this way they would keep all year. But they were most nutritious, of course, when fresh, and so, Olga says, mothers who had given birth even in November would try to nurse their infants through to the following autumn when they could take them off breast milk and feed them newly fallen chestnuts.

Olga recites these arrangements as if they were mere recipes, plain data from an almanac. She's not complaining, she's not bitter—though she isn't glad either. Talking about the Church, she says yes, she believes, except for one idea she's never quite understood: that one about the poor inheriting the earth, about pain and suffering somehow making you nobler. "I've lived on next to nothing, and I can do it if I'm forced to; but that I have to *welcome* the bad with the good—no, no."

She became engaged to Olivero by mail, while he was away with the *carabinieri*, and though they had gone through the fifth grade together, his letters often had words she'd never seen before. ("After all, he'd traveled; he had more experience.") But, she tells me, rather than use a dictionary, she would try to get the meaning on her own, sometimes reading the page over two hundred times until she figured out what that one word had to be.

She shouts when she talks; she has her mother's lung power, though her talent runs more toward prose than epic poems. She seizes on my visit as a long-awaited chance to polish the English she picked up from our GI's (howzawedder? whazzatime? godanywadderjoe?) and rounds off her list with the opening lines from "Sowsasa Border Down Mexico Way." I'm amazed she remembers after twenty-five years. Her son says his English teacher says his mother's mistaken, but still she insists, citing her contact with true, native speakers. "Those soldiers had no Italian," she points out, "so you *know* we had to speak English. They'd ask me to guide them, and send me on errands, though whenever I met a new one, I'd say 'me baby, me baby'—even



though I'd already started to menstruate—so he'd think I was, you know, little, and wouldn't give me any trouble." I'm puzzled by Olga's apologies for being "unschooled." I'm sure she could write a survivor's handbook, if she wanted.

Sauro, her son, the high-school commuter, often gets yelled at for not doing his homework. He'd rather go biking. It's his passion for biking, even more than his parentage, that marks him as a native-born son of this mountainside; traditionally, Italy's best cyclists come from the small hill towns, where the altitude, the uphill climb, and the lack of cars turn baby boys into cyclists before they're half grown, with prodigious lungs and calves and incredibly long legs. (Sauro's hero, Gimondi, is a mountain boy himself; in his teens, he was a mailman, pedaling his route along a string of mountain towns, and was spotted for racing when the word got around about his special swift deliveries. Olivero, too, remembers certain racers as the heroes of his boyhood and says that in each town along the route, local girls would line up on both sides of the road and throw pails of cooling water on them as they went by.)

Sauro's a good boy, though his father declares that he'll end up in the quarries if he doesn't improve in school; still, he's shy, and sensible—or, as Isola says, with no grasshoppers in his head. He can't stand girls yet; it's either the bike or his boyfriends. Weekends, he invites them over to stamp their feet (his mother's restaurant has the only Victrola in town) or goes down to watch a movie (Sunday afternoon, after Mass) which a traveling concessionaire projects on a bedsheet in the café.

Yesterday—though he had been avoiding me since I came here, afraid, his mother said, I would quiz him on his English—I found him waiting for me in the corridor near the kitchen, and leaning against the wall with his head bent down so all I could see was his hair falling forward, he mumblingly invited me to a local competition. The race was to start three towns downhill, ending in the one around the curve from here. Olivero drove us up in the car and we stood with the crowd on our side of the road to watch the lead boy come tearing through the ribbon. Sauro popped in next, as though attached to a string, and a pile of boys followed; but before anyone could shake their hands, the manager herded them into the back of his minibus where, in a jocular, angular explosion of elbows, they ripped off their T-shirts, panting, sweating, exuding such excitement that they steamed up the back windows and dissolved out of sight . . . till some moments later they tumbled out the front doors, dressed, hair combed, moist like infants, into the open, congratulating arms of their families.

I didn't meet his sister Santina until yesterday. I had already heard (in town) that she was blond, wore a miniskirt, and wanted to be a stewardess, so when Olga told me, sighing, she'd gone away for the week-

end, it half sounded as though she had run down to some city discotheque. I was wrong; she had gone to the shepherd's hut with her grandparents. It was a treat she'd been promised for getting all A's, and her mother was sighing because she missed her.

She walked in after breakfast—a teen-aged Heidi come down from the pastures, her blond hair in a ponytail and a basket of mushrooms on one sun-tanned arm. (Isola has been divulging her hiding places.) She has her brother Sauro's sky-blue eyes, plus the long mountain legs and apple-red cheeks. I've noticed this redness persists into old age here, the rosy flush of youth gradually coagulating into a woven crosshatch of tiny red veins; though whether, in the old people's case, this is from the altitude or from a lifetime of wine, it is hard to tell. I ask Santina what she *does* up at the hut; oh, she writes in her diary, collects chestnuts when they fall, gets up at dawn to follow her grandmother outside. Isola gives her the mushrooms she finds, too, to sell to city people for lipstick money.

She's more curious about me and my work than the others, and within an hour of meeting has girlishly attached herself, taking my arm as we walk down the road. We're off to the village, to do "research," she says—though really I was to do research in the quarries—and all the way down the gray stone path she chatters about the things she thinks I should know about: the future of mountain women, education, careers. Olga says she's been reading magazines.

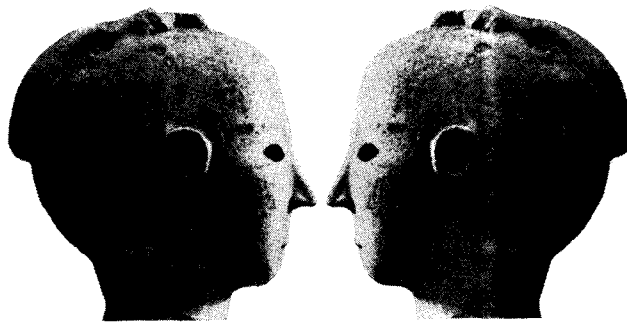
She mentions that less than half the girls in her class will be going on to high school in the city next year; most dropped out upon finishing the local grade school, agreeing with their parents that they should "stay home" until they married, and obtaining a doctor's certificate as a legal excuse for not commuting even to junior high two kilometers downhill.

Santina disapproves. The topic interests her keenly, and she's alert to its consequences at every step. When we stop to buy notions from the lady in the thread shop, she winces at the total—"These women can't read, but they sure can add!"—and, in the piazza, where other girls' grandmas look up and down at her shortish skirt, she sighs, "Ooh, for one day I'd like to be as tall as a house; then they'd get a fine crick in their necks!"

Her own mother, she admits, willingly shortens her skirts—but did I know Olga still believes in the evil eye? Cross her heart, she really does. When infants here start crying for no obvious reason, their mamas are sure some malingering has looked at them "crookedly" and send for Olga to say prayers and lift the spell. Olga pours olive oil in a bowl of water and if the oil forms drops, confirms the diagnosis. "And that's not all!" Santina adds, thinking to shock me further. "The so-called prayers are secret and Mama will only teach them to an initiate during the night of San Clemente. While the church bells are ringing!" Then she's off at a trot, plunging into the peaceful

The real

Cultures which see no further than themselves bear the seeds of their own destruction.



The ideal

We must recognize that other cultures can help us as much as we could help them.

Metropolitan Museum of Art
Benin Mask—A. Gargagliano

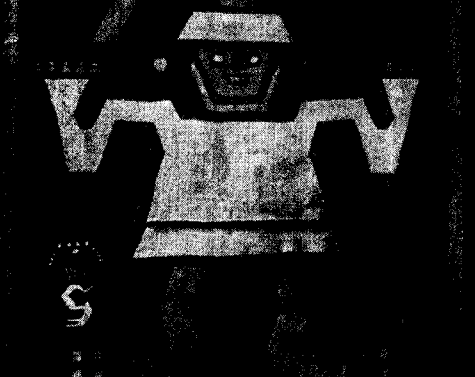
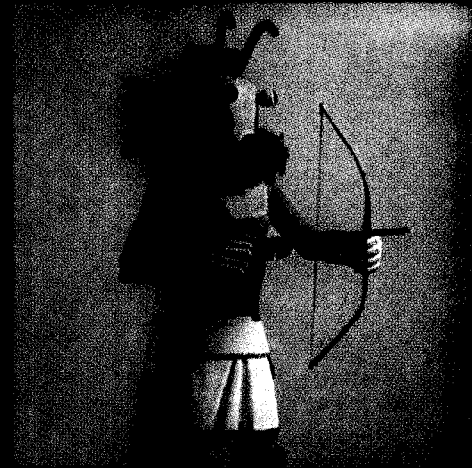
To the degree that people believe their solutions are the only ones, they begin to limit themselves and their futures.

Now, more than ever before, we have the opportunity to understand others and to profit from their knowledge. Because for the first time in history worldwide communications make it impossible for

any culture to isolate itself to the degree it can believe it has all the answers.

We have some answers. Other cultures have answers to problems we face now. We must ask them to help us—as we help them.

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Notes from an Italian Hill Town

circle of women around the fountain. and when she returns, it's with the scornful report that everyone said yes, the evil eye does exist. Walking home, quieted somewhat by the exertion of climbing, she finds breath to add that this is what her girlfriends will be missing in school, for the subject is discussed in geography class under the topic of folklore; in religion class under faith or superstition; at any rate, in school such things are frankly debated.

Evening brings a mellower mood—she's a country girl still and, for all her alertness, has been looking at mountain sunsets most of her life. Seeing me sitting alone on the terrace after dinner, she shyly brings out her notebook of poems—printed pages, a studious girl's sampler—evoking images of lonely clouds, of small white birds flying over the mountaintop. One poem, she assures me, is about a real person—a little girl from the village who died of meningitis (“innocent creature, martyred so young”) and whose tiny marble tomb I may visit in the cemetery. Then, as if remembering the business at hand, she unfolds a composition written after lunch and of which I'm to have a copy if it should prove useful: it's entitled, in fact, “The Secret Life of a Marble Quarrier” (“The quarrier wearily lays aside his heavy pick and, huddling against the winter frost, begins his climb down the dangerous path . . . while at home his faithful wife, their infant at her breast, wonders, Was today the day? did anyone fall?”). I know her father Olivero worries that she is oversensitive, and also about his part in this; after all, he's the one who named her Saint. He's told me he'll make an effort to take her to sports meets in the city.

I'd like to reassure him. Santina isn't sure yet just where she wants to come from. But she'll work that out in time—as she was perhaps doing earlier this afternoon when, on hearing voices, I looked in the kitchen to find her taking dictation from her grandmother. She was putting Isola's epic poem, her life story, down in writing.

My days in Terrinca are over and this evening I am to take the bus down. Isola is making something for me to bring along, something to eat: a treat made of chestnuts the kids gathered last fall which were dried and then ground at the mill in the village. She has kept the meal all winter in a cupboard in the kitchen.

Sauro, too shy to say good-bye, has posted himself outside—my sentry. He's sitting on his bike with his sweatband around his head, ready to yell when the bus claxon hoots from above the curve. Olga doesn't envy my trip. Someday she'd like to travel, she says, but only on foot.

Isola's afraid I haven't learned enough yet and yells out the names of things I'll not be seeing again: things in the room, what they are and where they come from. She intones their names as though they were christened this morning—or else, as if they've

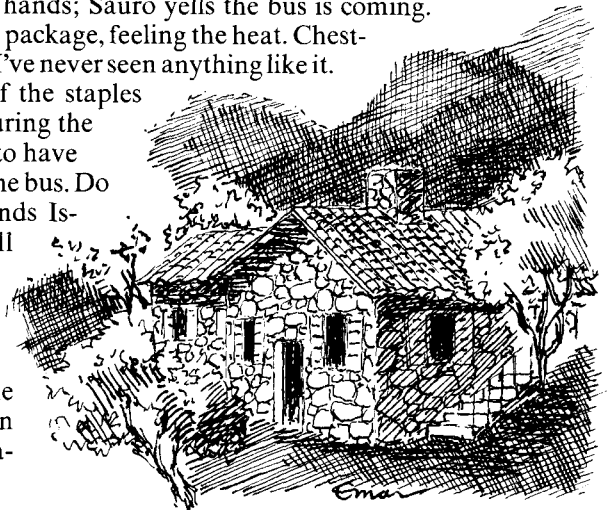
been here forever. Flat wood door and shutters (made from fir, good too for turpentine); stone floor and stone walls supporting stone fireplace; marble counter and tabletop, like the outdoor steps. I count on my fingers, hoping not to forget, and it occurs to me I've seen this before: this room's a recapitulation of the town outside. All that's been added, since this is a kitchen, are a couple of cane chairs, a pair of leather bellows, a whisk broom made of twigs, and an oilcloth umbrella. And a black cooking stove that burns charcoal made from beech wood. Chestnut wood charcoal is best for working metals, she says, pointing to the wrought-iron base beneath the table.

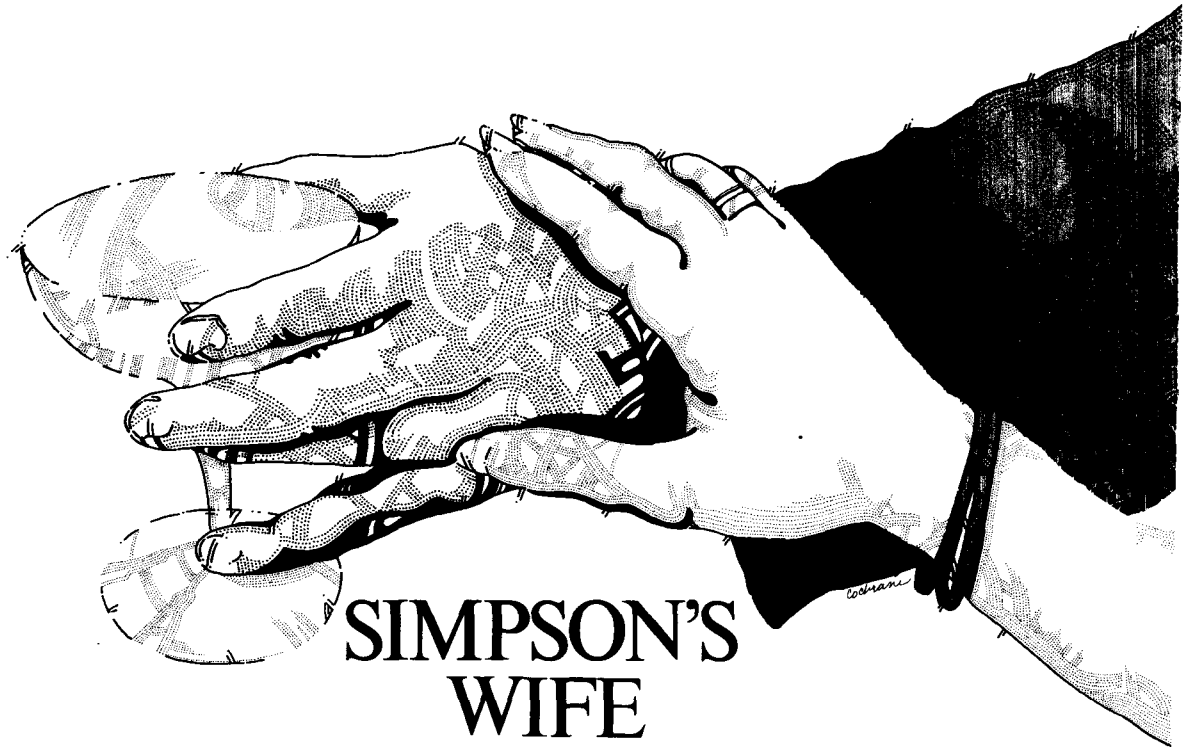
The treat she is making me is called *neccio* in dialect; she says she can't describe it, I'll just have to watch. She sits on a stool in front of the fireplace (olive wood: we want good steady flames and those logs have natural oil) and the family gathers round, as in a ceremony, to assist.

Olga has prepared the chestnut batter—dry meal mixed with water and salt. The sugar, she explains, is already *in* the chestnuts; that's why they're so nutritious. Santina breaks a raw egg into a cup, then stirs in some olive oil; her grandmother takes a fork, spears a slice of raw potato, dips it in the mixture, and uses it to grease the pan. The pan consists of two cast-iron disks which are fastened by a hinge and are opened and closed by two flat iron handles. The handles are three feet long and the disks one foot across; they have no sides and close flat, like a press. Isola pours a cup of chestnut batter into the pan, closes it tightly, and inserts it in the fire. When the mixture begins to seep between the edges, she withdraws the pan and drops the grainy patty onto a sheet of brown paper.

Olivero, meanwhile, has brought in a bowl of green leaves and parts them on top to show a mound of cottage cheese, made from sheep's milk brought down from the pastures; he'd wrapped the cheese in beech leaves to keep it fresh. Santina scoops some cheese into the center of each patty, rolling it smoothly and pressing the edges. Isola counts out a dozen and deposits them in a paper bag which she thrusts into my hands; Sauro yells the bus is coming. I hold the heavy package, feeling the heat. Chestnut meat rolls—I've never seen anything like it.

This was one of the staples they lived on during the war. Now I am to have it as a snack on the bus. Do I realize, demands Isola, that it all comes right from this hillside? Indeed I do. She's wrapped up the whole mountain in that brown paper bag. □





SIMPSON'S WIFE

A story by Ward Just

He always finished dressing before she did, and slipped down to the kitchen to make a drink before they went out. Now he was leaning on the armoire in their bedroom, the drink in his hand, watching her fix her face in the bathroom. He saw her once removed from across the room, looking into the mirror at her reflection as she pouted and grimaced, arranging her eye makeup and hair. He sipped his drink and stood quite still, staring straight into the mirror.

"... will you try to do that? You can do it."

"Ummmm," she said, talking around a pin in her mouth.

"He'll talk to you."

She nodded.

"It's causing me real problems, as you well know. Or maybe you don't. Anyway, if I lean on him it'll just antagonize him. Those bastards, you ask them for the time of day and they think you're trying to repeal the First Amendment. Still, I don't know what he's after. What he wants."

"Sim?"

"It's the third day in a row he's been on my back. This little thing of mine just isn't worth all that space. No one cares about it except me and a few friends. Hell, it's still in committee; it hasn't even been reported yet. Little pissant, just affects a few guys. Someone's put him up to it, and I don't know who. The tax laws're so damned complicated now, a man can't do business. Now, that's the truth of the matter: a legitimate businessman cannot operate."

"Will you hook me up?"

"I got two calls from home today on it, guys wanting to know what was up. What's Baxter on your back for? It's lousy publicity, and it comes at the wrong time. Someone's put him up to it, I repeat. OK, you're hooked."

"It'd be easier if you put down the drink."

"So if you talk to him, I might know what's going on. What he wants."

"I'll talk to him."

"You're a sweetheart."

"What do you want me to say?"

"I'll leave that to your judgment. You can ask him what he thinks he's doing. Tactfully, of course; casual. Why he's interested."

"That's very tactful."

"The goddamned fag," Simpson said.

They put the top down on the Pontiac, and Simpson's wife drove. The night was balmy, the Congressman took off his white jacket and laid it carefully on the back seat; he handed his wife a silk scarf for her hair. Simpson was satisfied, feeling good, the warm night air spilling over the windshield and ruffling his hair. They cruised slowly up Massachusetts Avenue, the tires of the Pontiac squeaking on the warm pavement.

"Do you need any money?"

"Money?"

"Your account. Is your account full?"

"Sure. I suppose it is."

"Well, I just wondered if it was low."

"It isn't low, Sim."

"I was just wondering."

"You can put in another thousand if you want. I can use some things for the house. I can buy another chaise, and a rug for the dining room. Maybe a summer coat for myself. One or two of those things, not all of them."

"I'll have Sheila put some money in the account tomorrow."

They drove in silence for a bit, past St. Alban's School and the National Cathedral and up Massachusetts Avenue into Spring Valley.

"What's the cast of characters tonight?"

Simpson thought a moment, and named one senator (Whyte), two lawyers from the large downtown firms, the British DCM, and the journalist, her friend Baxter. Simpson knew all the moves; they would have two cocktails on the porch, then drift inside for dinner. They would talk soberly about the campaign, who was up, who was down; the political errors of one candidate, the money troubles of another. Baxter would lead the conversation, quoting from his columns no doubt. Simpson had been keeping in reserve one or two new facts to reveal, and these would be interesting, particularly to Whyte.

Simpson's wife was smiling. "Billy Baxter. I can never get over it. When I first knew him . . ."

"He's still a *nothing*," Simpson said.

"You don't say," she said.

"You give them nine square inches of print, and they think they're Arnold Toynbee. Or the avenging angel."

"Billy Baxter," she said.

"Well, he's bitten off too much this time. I can handle him. On the other hand, he may have shot his wad. He may be all finished now."

"Billy was always known for his persistence," she said.

Simpson grunted.

"It'll be good to see him again."

"Don't let me get stuck with Mary Whyte, OK?"

"You save me from the fool she's married to, the Senator."

"The Fool, as you call him, is one of the five or six most powerful men in the United States."

She smiled and drove on. She liked the night, with its sounds and what she believed was its promise. She thought that June was gorgeous in Washington, the flowers in bloom and the night air so soft and tropical, so sensual. She was sexier in the summer than in the winter, and there was no satisfactory explanation for it. She thought that it had to do with lying naked between cool white sheets; she refused to buy an air conditioner for the bedroom. She felt the wind in her face, and drove very slowly to Tilden Street, then turned and slid the car next to the curb. Simpson was up and out and standing impatiently on the sidewalk as she extricated herself from behind the wheel, after

first checking in the rear-vision mirror to see that her lipstick was on straight and her hair neatly done. She smiled to herself, because she saw she was blushing.

After dinner, Baxter stood in a corner of the living room, talking with Mary Whyte. Simpson's wife took a demitasse from the silver tray, and moved to join them: The three talked for five minutes, and then Mary Whyte left to join the others. A butler moved softly around the room, offering liqueurs and Scotch.

"How are you, Bill?"

"The better for seeing you. It's been a long time. You're looking *very* well tonight."

"It's the air," she said.

"I thought it might be the summer."

"Maybe that, too."

Baxter laughed; he'd known Simpson's wife for fifteen years, since college. They walked away from the others, and stood in the doorway to the back porch.

"Bill, will you tell me? Who's the one sitting over *there*, the one next to our hostess. I didn't catch his name."

Baxter slowly turned around, as if he were looking for something lost. Then he turned back.

"That's Bergen."

"He's a lawyer?"

"Well, not exactly. I suppose he has a law degree somewhere. But actually he introduces people." He watched her face break into a smile, as he knew it would. Now he could string the story out a little, and they would have some fun.

"Who? What do you mean?" Simpson's wife laughed. "What is he, a headwaiter? A professional greeter?"

"In a way." Baxter lit a cigarette, and smiled. "Look, a guy wants to get together with another guy, and maybe it's inconvenient for the one guy to call the other. Perhaps, for some odd reason, that's awkward. Well, Bergen gets the parties together. A guy calls him and then he calls the other guy. Perhaps there's a financial transaction first. Anyway, he has a house that he uses for the introductions."

Simpson's wife was amused; she found something new in Washington every day. Washington was not New York or San Francisco; it was too public in too many ways. But there were other compensations. People from the outside thought it was glamorous and exciting to dine with the Secretary of State or the Senate Majority Leader. But that wasn't it at all. Those people were bores. What enchanted her about Washington were the Baxters and the Bergens, men who were back in the woodwork, men with no specific authority or title, but the men who made the town go. Toads, she called them. An hour with Bergen was worth an hour with anybody, with the possible exception of Baxter, whose life was complicated *beyond belief*, and who knew everything. He was one of the reasons she loved Washington and would

never leave. The parties she went to, so serene and unselfconscious on the outside, and so gloriously intricate once you knew the secrets. Simpson's wife saved secrets like other women saved string.

"So he gets men together," she said.

"That's right."

"In his house. Then he leaves the room?"

"Sometimes yes, sometimes no. Depends on what he has to contribute. Sometimes he contributes a good deal. Often Bergen is the nominee, for one party or the other. Once—oh, it is doubtless an exaggeration—he is said to have negotiated with himself. He worked it so he was the nominee for two men. These were men who would've found it awkward to meet in person. The negotiations were held at such long range that he was able to . . . sell himself each to the other. Turn and turn about, as you might say. Then he cut himself in for a percentage of the deal both ways."

"And was everyone satisfied?"

"Very," Baxter said.

"Would there be another name for that?"

Simpson's wife was looking Baxter in the eye, suppressing her laughter. He was the only man she knew who took her seriously enough to be droll. It was not a town of wits, and Baxter was very special in that way. He was very easy with her now. "What do you think it would be?"

Baxter appeared very grave, his hands went to his temples and he thought. "Perhaps . . . fixer?"

"Would you call him a fixer, Bill?"

"I think I would."

"Then so will I," Simpson's wife said.

They were silent for a minute, looking at each other and grinning. Baxter thought he would save the specifics that he knew about Bergen. Simpson's wife would want to hear them later.

"What are you now, thirty-five?"

"Six," she said. "Six last week. Married fifteen years, and in the prime of my time."

"It's not fifteen years."

He looked and sounded so serious that she laughed, and imitated his voice. "Yes, it's fifteen years."

"I'll be damned."

"Well, he's been on the Hill for twenty. Controlling that committee for three. He *does love* that committee; do you think there's anything unnatural about it?"

"It's a very beautiful committee. Rich, too."

She moved toward him and grinned. "It's the only thing he does control."

"Well, that spoils my compliment. It might make you think that I had some undercover, hidden, *ultimate* motive . . ."

"I wouldn't think of it, Bill." She began to laugh. "You go right ahead and say it, whatever it is. I hope you were going to say that I was beautiful, too."

"As a matter of fact, I was going to say that you have no competition anywhere. And was going to

add that, unlike the committee, you are not dumb."

"Gee, thanks. I like the dumb part."

"Wonderful-looking. Brainy. Transcendent."

"Careful," she said.

"That, too."

"Well, isn't it a fair trade? He has the committee. I have Washington. We have what we want." She shrugged.

"I hope you had a birthday party."

"Well, a delegation was in from the district, so instead of a birthday party we had a buffet. They were schoolteachers, wonderfully interesting, really. Science teachers, as I recall. The delegation was . . . so interesting. It was very hot last week, you'll recall."

"Particularly the nights," Baxter said.

"Yes, those. The days, too."

"You know, Sim knows Bergen pretty well."

"I had a hunch that he might," she said.

Simpson was on the couch, talking to Bergen and Whyte. He said a good deal more than he'd meant to, and his listeners were attending to the words. He watched his wife and Baxter in the porch doorway; she was almost as tall as he was. He saw her touch his arm, and then laugh. Baxter leaned forward and whispered something into her ear, and she laughed again, loudly; she was laughing too loudly. Scandal, Simpson thought, they were talking scandal. He could tell by the way his wife laughed, throwing her head back and running her hand through her hair. The journalist turned toward their couch, then looked away.

"Sim?"

It was Bergen. Whyte had left to fix a drink.

"What's Baxter on your ass for?"

Simpson shrugged, and muttered an obscenity. He didn't want to talk about Baxter; there was nothing Bergen could do about him. He would leave Baxter to his wife.

"Are we on for Thursday?"

"We are," Bergen said.

"Are you meant to be there as well?"

"I can be there if you want me to be there, always on the proviso that it isn't inconvenient for the others. This can't be clumsy in any way."

"I think it would be a hell of a good thing. I want to make it absolutely clear to our friends what can and cannot be done. And I think it would be appropriate for you to be there. As the disinterested party, in case any questions come up. These guys have a habit of juicing promises."

"*D'accord*," Bergen said.

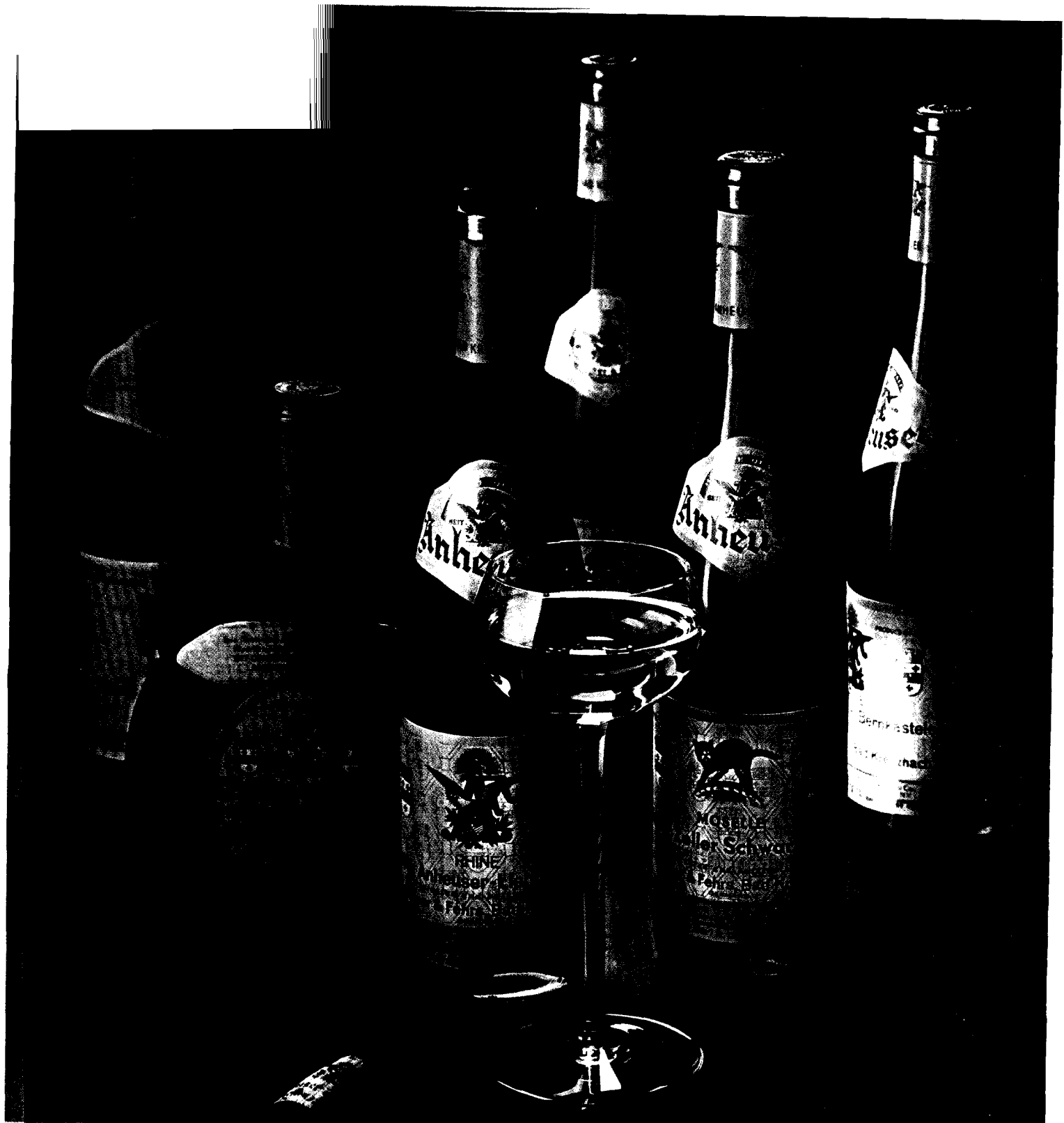
"But if that goddamned Baxter keeps it up, there won't be any *d'accord*, so you'd better remember that."

"The others asked me about him."

"You can tell them that Mr. Baxter will cease and desist. After tonight." He wondered if his wife had



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had a chance to work in close, to find out what Baxter was doing and where he was getting his information from. Now Bergen was asking him another question, and Simpson refocused to answer it. He thought that sometimes he did not understand his wife, who could have a very good time with a bloody fag. She looked to be enjoying herself.

"What are you up to now, Bill?"

"You know damned well what I'm up to."

"You've been a little hard on Sim lately. Poor baby, he can hardly sleep."

"Poor Sim."

"He thinks you want something from him. That you've got an angle and you're not letting on what it is."

"Baxter with an angle? Improbable."

She smiled; she knew that when he spoke in the third person he was concealing something. It was an old habit of journalism. "Sim thought that maybe you wanted something and he could get it for you."

"If I get one more break, I'll get the Pulitzer Prize."

She said quietly, "Is it that serious?"

"That serious," he said.

"Well, if you want an introduction . . ."

He smiled at her.

". . . I'm here." She paused, and leaned toward him. "Look, Bill. I'd not meant to get into that at all. Really, I meant your life. How things were. Any happier now . . . than then?"

"Some," he said.

"Well, I won't say the obvious things. We've talked about it before, God knows." She smiled quickly. "Too much, maybe."

"Well, it's a varied life. As you know." He paused. "Then as now, it doesn't change a hell of a lot."

She nodded; he seemed to want to talk about it. She thought he was going to say something more and waited for it, and when he didn't there was dead space between them. "Where are you living?" she asked.

"Same house, near the Cathedral. It's quiet. I planted a magnolia in my backyard. You're invited to see it. Very nice in the summertime. a drink in the backyard . . ."

She looked at him, hurt. "I know that."

"It's not much of a life. We had a better one, I think."

She was silent a moment. Then: "Sim's going back to the district next week, a ten-day visit. I'll be alone here, no obligations at all. He leaves on Tuesday, sometime in the morning. Come by that night, I'll

cook dinner. Or the afternoon, if you like. Luscious," she said.

"I'd like that."

"You're free then?"

"Like the seasons, darling. Spring's ended, summer's here. Change, the meaning of life. We were always summer people. That's Washington; the people change but the town remains the same. We know all about that, don't we?"

She pressed: "What are you going to do about Sim?"

He looked at her, saw her blush.

"Bill?"

She touched his arm, he imagined the urgent softness of her fingers.

"You know damned well," he said, and they both laughed. □

THE PALE ONES

A clearing: a burnt-out space: it was either that or they'd hack down altogether the rain-forest back of your eyes. So we scorched—with the usual pain and help—the usual square for such a case: you built your hut with the wide veranda, achieved the houseboy, all as it should be, the bottle of Jamieson's, volumes of Wharton and Maugham, the white goat at the fence, the shrub at the well. Now drain your glass, now fold your hands and nod to the sunset—nice. Later the basic creatures will grunt at the water hole. But those that rushed from the blaze at first, the shy amazing pale ones, appearing tottering, blinking at your edges: have they gone beyond? back in? are they hiding? At times when you think you sleep, near dawn, I listen, and softly, very softly I hear you call them.

by Barry Spacks

THREE POEMS

by W. H. Auden

PSEUDO-QUESTIONS

Who could possibly approve of Metternich
and his Thought Police? Yet in a liberal
milieu would Adalbert Stifter have written
his noble idylls?

Vice versa, what God-fearing Magistrate
would dream of shaking hands with a financial
crook and Anti-Semite? Yet Richard Wagner
wrought masterpieces.

Wild horses could not drag me to debates on
Art and Society: critics with credos,
Christian or Marxist, should keep their trap shut,
lest they spout nonsense.

LONELINESS

Gate-crashing ghost, aggressive
invisible visitor,
tactless gooseberry, spoiling
my *tête-à-tête* with myself,
blackmailing brute, behaving
as if the house were your own,
so viciously pursuing
your victim from room to room,
monotonously nagging,
ungenerous jabberer,
dirty devil, befouling
fair fancies, making the mind
a quagmire of disquiet,
weakening my will to work,
shadow without shape or sex,
excluding consolation,
blotting out Nature's beauties,
grey mist between me and God,
pestilent problem that won't
be put on the back-burner,
hard it is to endure you.

Routine is the one technique
I know of that enables
your host to ignore you now:
while typing business letters,
laying the table for one,
gobbling a thoughtless luncheon,
I briefly forget you're there,
but am safe from your haunting
only when soundly asleep.

History counsels patience:
tyrants come, like plagues, but none
can rule the roost for ever.
Indeed, your totter is near,
your days numbered: to-morrow
Chester, my chum, will return.
Then you'll be through: in no time
he'll throw you out neck-and-crop.
We'll merry-make your cadence
with music, feasting and fun.

STARK BEWÖLKT
(for Stella Musulin)

I'm no photophil who burns
his body brown on beaches:
foolish I find this fashion
of modern surf-riding man.
Let plants by all means sun-bathe,
it helps them to make their meals,
exposure, through, to ultra-
violet vapids the brain,
bids us be stodge and stupid.
Still, safe in some sheltered shade,
or watching through a window,
an aging male, I demand
to see a smiling summer,
a sky bright and wholly blue,
save for a drifting cloudlet
like a dollop of whipped cream.
This year all is unthuswise:
O why so glum, weather-god?

Day after day we waken
to be scolded by a scowl,
venomous and vindictive,
a flat frowning Friday face,
horrid as a hang-over,
and mean as well: if you must
so disarray the heavens.
at least you might let them rain.
(Water is always welcome,
for trees to take neat and men
to make brandy or beer with.)
But, no, we don't get a drop,
dry you remain and doleful
in a perpetual pique.

Fowls mope, flowers are wretched,
the raspberry-canes are forced
into phyllomania.

To ignore you, not be cross,
one would have to be either
drunk, lit on amphetamines,
or a feverish lover:
being dead sober all day,
I find your bearing boorish,
by four in the afternoon
frequently close the curtains
to shut your shabbiness out.

Who or what are you mad at?
What has poor Austria done
to draw such disapproval?
The *Beamterei*, it's true,
is as awful as ever,
the drivers are dangerous,
standards at the *Staatsoper*
steadily decline each year,
and *Wien's* become provincial
compared to the pride she was.
Still, it's a cosy country,
unracked by riots or strikes
and backward at drug-taking:
I've heard of a dozen lands
where life sounds far more ugly,
fitter goals for your disgust.
(I needn't name them, for you, whose
glance circumspects the whole globe,
ken at first-hand what's cooking.)

Have done! What good does it do,
dumb god, just to deject us?
Foul our function may be, but
foul weather won't reform it.
If you merely wish our world
to mend its ways, remember:
when happy, men on the whole
behave a wee bit better,
when unhappy, always worse.

"IS THIS LIKE YOUR WAR, SIR?"

The line of battle, 1944-1945, revisited

by Arthur T. Hadley

"Is this like your war?" The medic sergeant, two riflemen, the radio operator, the squad leader, and I, a reporter, lay huddled against the white grass-covered sand of a dike in central Vietnam, listening to the enemy bullets crack harmlessly overhead. Over and over again in one form or another throughout Vietnam I was asked the same question. Many times the requests for information were technical: What weapon did I fear most? How many men did we lose a day? Did we wear helmets? What were the lifers (regular soldiers) like? But underneath was the broader question: What had I inherited from my war?

In 1969, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the invasion of Europe, I had made a pilgrimage to my own European battlefields to try and answer that question. I had felt what truths I ever held about World War II were slipping from me. There was my tendency to boast, the pressure by society that a writer hold certain beliefs, the lack of discussion with people who shared the experiences, and time itself. So, since I was in Europe on another story, I flew to The Hague, rented a Volkswagen, and tried to drive into my past. My war actually began in France; but I was busy then learning my trade, the firing of artillery shells containing propaganda leaflets and the making of loudspeaker broadcasts to the enemy. My hostile contacts were far apart and brief. When I had visited my French battlefields some years before, I discovered I could remember nothing.

I have a specific objective for my first day. (I find myself slipping back into the old military terms as I drive.) I am looking for fifty yards of country road just east of a small bend in the Maas River between Sittard and Roermond. In memory the road is one lane, macadamized, treelined, and runs straight between the tiny, gentle hills of southeast Holland. Walking down this stretch of road late one morning, through a mist that kept rising and falling, I heard the sound of incoming shells and threw myself

against the grassy verge without even time to make the drainage ditch. When I picked myself up, I saw fresh white scars on the already mutilated trees, and of the five men walking with me, two were unhurt, one wounded slightly, two seriously. One of these died; the blue-white death color was rising into his face as we, the unhurt, ripped open bandages. My dive had been no faster, further, wiser than the others. Chance had decided.

From this road on I ceased to think about chance, but accepted it as a basic fact of life. Later, I easily accepted as true the Darwinian and quantum revolutions with their lessons of probability and chance.

I cannot find anything that remotely resembles my stretch of road. I was prepared for changes, a few houses built here, some suburbs grown there; but I was unprepared for the total transformation of agricultural countryside into urban workshop, the industrialization of post-Marshall Plan Europe. Where I believe my road to have been there is now a four-lane divided highway, on either side of which stretch gigantic factories rivaling Detroit. Between my memories and old military maps and the new maps and ground of today exists zero correlation. After several hours of frantic search, I become as bleak as the damp September weather, convinced the whole trip will prove a mistake.

As I awaken early the next morning in Maastricht, near the Dutch-Belgian border, I at least recognize the weather, the thick, cold fog that contains both safety and menace. Thinking "what luxury," I shave in warm water and take a hot bath. Perhaps for this trip I should have tried to find the old-time clothes: scratchy winter undershirt, olive-drab flannel pants and shirt, tank boots, combat jacket. (By midwinter of 1944, I had worn undershirt and pants, winter undershirt and pants, a sweater, a ski parka, olive-drab flannel pants and shirt, combat pants, a second sweater, a British leather cold-weather vest, combat jacket, scarf, wool helmet, helmet, and, finally, an overcoat. The overcoat had my mittens pinned to the

sleeves like a child's, so I wouldn't lose them when tired. Sometimes people ask me now about the Battle of the Bulge, and I have to start with the clothes, and being cold and tired and having the flu. By the time I get to the bullets, they have wandered off.)

Outside of Maastricht, I find the turnoff to Bemelen, where my unit was headquartered for two months. The road used to be dirt and now is asphalt. Where it once went through fields, it now passes row houses; but in some indefinable way I am sure it's the same road. I am certain about the fields because I used to watch a farmer digging up his turnips and think of Hardy's poem that begins: "Only a man harrowing clods . . ."

A white sign says Bemelen. I do not remember this cluster of stone houses. I didn't live in this map place. Natives lived here. My Bemelen is where my unit deployed around a small hotel outside of town, the one the guidebook describes as having a flowered terrace and a lovely view toward the west. I don't remember that.

I round a corner and see the hotel. The building appears unchanged: whitewashed walls, thatched roof. I pull into the parking lot. In the early morning no one else is up. I tour the outside of the hotel and end up on the terrace, which is full of flowers. The early morning mist burns off. There is, indeed, a magnificent view west. I never saw it. An anti-aircraft unit had two guns on this terrace and I used to think: what a great field of fire. The harsh angles of steel and the attitude of soldier blotted out today's tourist's vision. We brought our war world with us to live in, as we do now in Vietnam. We named our battles and halting places after nearby towns, but the names held different meanings for us and those who lived there.

I walk into the hotel to have coffee. The hotel has changed hands twice since the war. No one is around who remembers my reality, or is interested.

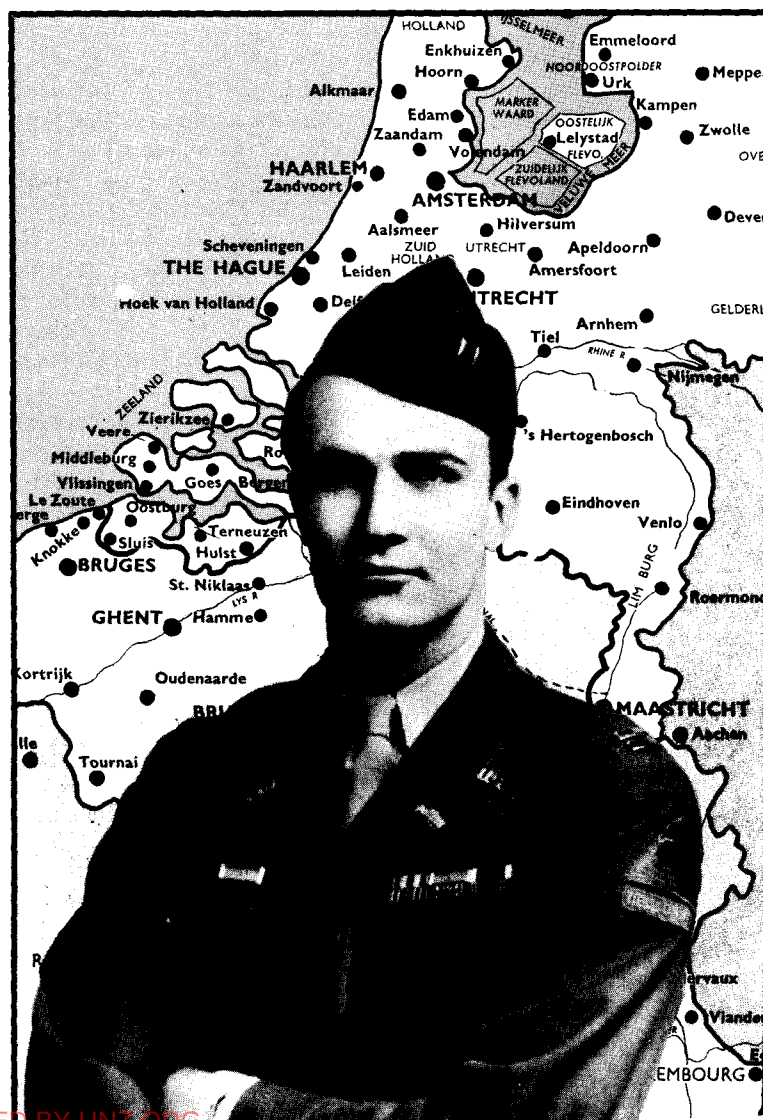
Traveling again, I take the road north toward Heerlen and Sittard. Again the country has not merely changed; it has been transformed: industrial suburbs, factories, new roads, mines. In Sittard I cannot even find the church from whose tower I watched a group of Germans going through their chow line for about half an hour. We lacked the ammunition to fire. There I learned how short of ammunition the drive across France had left us.

I drive east out of Sittard, toward the German border. The signs say Geilenkirchen and Düsseldorf. Intellectually, I accept these signs as true, realizing I could be in Düsseldorf for lunch. But emotionally, I regard them as total lies, insults to my intelligence. You cannot get from Sittard to Geilenkirchen, twelve miles away. The German army and Siegfried Line lie in between. And as for Düsseldorf, that's on the other side of the Rhine. You get there after six months, by way of breaching the West Wall, the Battle of the Bulge, crossing the Roer, bridging the

Rhine. I could see these signs every day of my life and still not have the cartography of my past erased by the truth of their present.

Trying to get back on my World War II maps, I turn off the main road toward the tiny town of Hastenrath. Suddenly, for the first time, I move into total recall. Not just memory recognized, as in Bemelen; here I re-enter the event itself. I race along this narrow road through these flat fields being mortared, trying to make the next curve past that farm ahead, after this deadly stretch of straight. Look, the trees bordering the road are all the same half size, planted after the war—except that lone tall one, which lacks branches from its middle up and is twisted and maimed. I stop the Volkswagen and get out, breathing heavily. If you fire a pistol close to a child when he eats ice cream, he will in a few days become frightened of ice cream. I am terrified by this tree.

I return to the car, drive slowly to the corner, and turn left toward the twenty-odd buildings that make up Hastenrath. The town has not changed, though



Arthur T. Hadley, 1945

the red brick church at its center has a new tower (the bricks a darker shade of red) to replace the old one torn apart by giant shells. While I crouched on a beam in this tower, adjusting leaflet fire, the Germans ranged on the church with high-velocity cannon. One shot struck the tower's base. I had read several months before, while still in the States, that if taken under fire while adjusting artillery, one should not stop because the enemy would then be certain where you were and shell the hell out of you. Instead, you should keep firing until he shifted his fire to another place and then stop, causing him to clobber the wrong target.

Against the advice of the other officer in the Hastenrath tower, I kept firing. The Germans quit shelling us and began to work over the church tower in the next town. I quit firing. The Germans blew the hell out of the wrong tower. Years later, I read a lecture by Werner Heisenberg on the implications of modern physics which concluded: "We can only use our powers to maximize our chances." Physicist and soldier, we lived on the same map. I had forgotten Hastenrath, and that I learned this lesson here. I had not been looking for this church tower. I am glad I found it.

Sittard and Hastenrath set the pattern for my trip. The bigger towns and industrial cities have grown so much that though now and then I may recognize a landmark, too little remains the same to set the tapes of memory playing with force. Even places I was certain I could not possibly forget, like the main square of Hildesheim, where Sergeant Plice left the safety of his tank to save my life, appear brand-new. The smaller towns, the farming dorfs like Hastenrath, remain more as they were. Sometimes they seem to have been placed under a spell, like the mythical Germalshausen, to wait unchanged to mingle their present with my past.

Immendorf and Puffendorf are two such unaltered farming towns. Just west of the Roer River, the pillboxes and concrete tank obstacles of the Siegfried Line snaked through their fields. I used to move through those fields among the rotting cabbage heads, reciting to myself over and over again a variation on A. E. Housman:

Immendorf and Puffendorf
Waurichen and Prum
Are the deadliest places
Under the sun.

Approaching Immendorf, I know exactly where I am. I park my Volkswagen-turned-Jeep and walk down a road, as familiar as my home driveway, to the farm I used as an OP (Observation Point) and in whose basement I stored the loudspeakers. To climb its roof now would be to trespass; but peering around its corner, I see in the hazy autumn distance the exact landscape I knew. And I am again afraid.

Some children point at me and laugh. Can they smell my alien fear? In the fields the cabbages are blue and green, not the dead browns and purples I

remember. The noise, too, is totally different, more silent and yet noisier, alive with children, dogs, and birds. I begin to drift out of my past back into the present, feeling great, suddenly realizing how beautiful the day is—life is. In the four months I was here then, I do not recall ever noticing a beautiful day. And the distances, deprived of danger, have shrunk. In five minutes I walk across a field between Waurichen and Immendorf that took us over a month to cross: October 7 to November 16. The antitank ditch is weed-filled but still there. I climb into it, feeling safer.

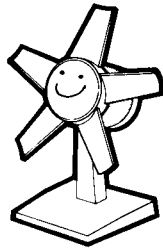
On these fields, day after day, by conscious choice, men were brave, sometimes brave beyond wildest fiction. I do not mean that all men were noble, that there were no cowards, that the fields shone like the sun. That's crap. But so is the belief that there were no heroes present, or only the confused, the father-dominated, the too early toilet-trained, or the latently homosexual. And the bravest were most often the first hit. I cry, part in relief to be alive, part in guilt at being alive. I feel the strangeness of my then self inside my now.

When I was discharged from the hospital, I went into a drugstore to buy razor blades for the first time in my life. I was acutely embarrassed because I, a grown man, just dumped from the peak of Captain Hadley to ordinary civilian, had no idea how much blades cost. I had not had to use them when, at eighteen, I entered the Army. For four years I had been issued them. I put down a ten-dollar bill so that the woman behind the counter would not guess my ignorance. When she could not change the ten, I fled, bladeless.

I want to eat lunch at a little inn in Immendorf. But walking through the town before my meal (seeing bits of ground I'd raced across, hearing the tank engines), I come upon the cemetery. A great many of the tombstones are from October and November, 1944, the months of our offensive. Many, by their names, are women; others, by their dates, are, yes, children. I skip lunch.

The next day, five miles southeast of Immendorf's familiarity, I search for, and cannot find (Aachen's suburbs have overgrown the fields), a crossroads I revisit in memory and pain at least four or five times each year. The Twenty-ninth Division had been attacking a group of buildings near Merzenhausen. I knew I could get the Germans there to surrender by loudspeaker, for the Second Armored almost had the position outflanked, but I couldn't get permission from the colonel in charge of the attack to make a loudspeaker broadcast. Loudspeakers were new and suspect; I was barely twenty and a second lieutenant, lacking both the rank and the tenacity to move authorized seniority. So I sat in the loudspeaker parked by the crossroads and watched in impotence and agony as the two tired columns of infantry trudged forward along each side of the road. I, who had the means to help them, had failed.

That crossroads is gone. I can no more find it than



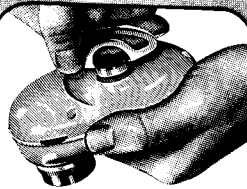
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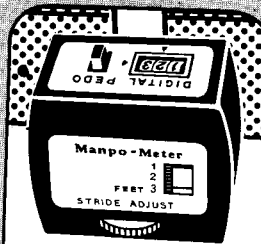


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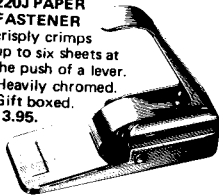


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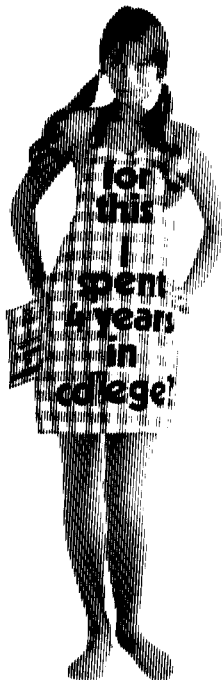
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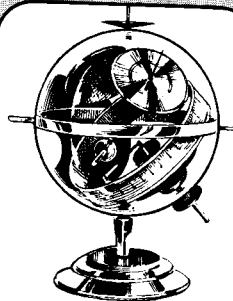
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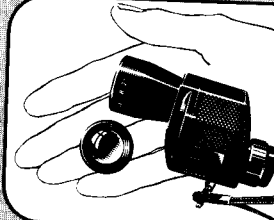
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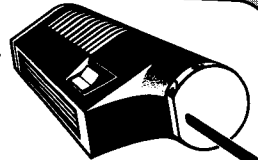


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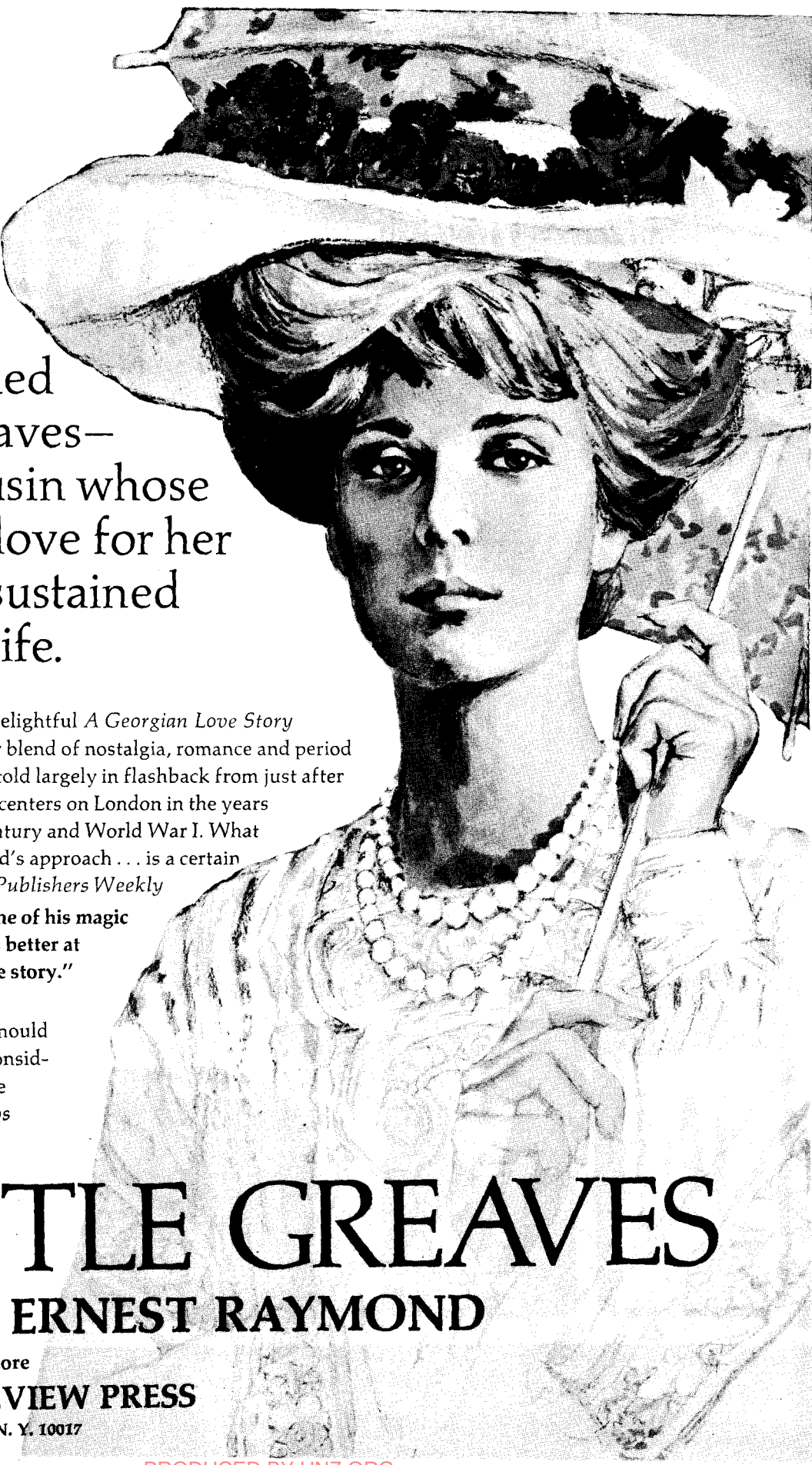
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"Is This Like Your War, Sir?"

a Roman who marched out of Aachen, then Aquisgranum, to push the German tribes back beyond the Rhine, would recognize a landmark. In A.D. 463 the Ripuarians defeated the Romans here and reconquered the area. Norsemen and Normans, Germans and French, fought over these fields from A.D. 600 to 1248, when William of Holland won a famous victory that brought peace for two hundred years.

I spend eight days on my trip. Too long. Occasionally a whole day passes when I don't recognize a thing, or only think I do. But I must put in every day because I never know when the spool of memory will suddenly restart.

I am following, in low gear, a forest track through the Teutoburger Wald, from which we debouched north of Detmold. The old maps tell me, and I believe, that I am on the right path; but I am not emotionally involved. After all, inside a forest a tree is a tree. I come around a corner and before me, at an intersection, stand two tanks and an armored car. I recognize the insignia of the British Seventeenth Hussars, a NATO unit.

I pick the battered World War II map off the Volkswagen seat beside me and walk over through the rain to the British major whose head protrudes above the edge of the armored car turret. He is working his radios. "Pardon me," I say. "You are standing on my map."

I show him my old map. He shows me his modern one. He, on a NATO maneuver, is attacking through the same pass we did. "It's frightfully interesting, your taking part in that World War II action," he says to me. "It's a classic. We studied it in school."

Christ. I have passed into history without enjoying a present. When? A mile from here Arminius defeated the Roman legions under Varus. A decisive battle. The Emperor Augustus, waking from nightmares all his remaining life, to cry: "Varus, Varus, give me back my legions." The major and I talk awhile. I drive on.

Just before the track breaks from the Teutoburger Wald, it jogs left. I pull between two pines and quickly stop. As I walk forward through the pines, I know that around the barn in front I will see across one field and low hill to the next town. I do. The town, Fromhausen, is there as then. Not memory, the past instant itself, deep frozen, is liberated at this moment. Suddenly, behind me, I hear the NATO tanks, unseen, grind into position. They fire blanks. The hairs on the backs of my arms rise, and I feel the cold, before-battle sweat start on my palms. For the next two hours, from Fromhausen through Bad Meinberg, Blomberg, Bad Pyrmont, I make every jog and turn through the countryside instinctively, threaded perfectly into the sprocket of my past. I know what lurks around each corner, hear the shell-fire, see the tracers; a tank burns.

I am singing as I drive, yelling at the top of my lungs, for I remember the joy. Days when my heart sang, as at Ahlen, when the Germans came out to surrender after a loudspeaker broadcast, and I saw the relief on the tankers' faces. Most war novels, the conventional wisdom, literary criticism, deny this joy. I had almost grown afraid to admit it to myself, but it was there. I was in history. I had a part to play. I was as happily committed to the welfare of my fellow-men, while looking after myself, as a reform medieval monk. Do those under fire in Vietnam have the same feeling? Some appear to; but the diminution of this joy seems to me a vital difference between "then" and "now."

My trip ends against the twenty-foot-high triple lines of barbed-wire fences, studded with machine-gun towers and patrolled by dogs, that the Russians and East Germans have emplaced to separate them from the world. I will not be able to drive over the stretch of road on which I was wounded; but that moment itself is unimportant. I had assumed I would be hit someday (much as I believe football players assume they may be hurt). The actual event merely removed me to safety and stopped my concern over when and how.

However, part of what I have inherited from World War II is a result of that moment. I wake each morning in some pain, not much, but noticeable. A faint trace of the past, like my remembered joy; but recalling totally different values.

Much more importantly, I will not see again the treelined lane near Magdeburg that led to my first concentration camp. Coming down the road toward the barbed-wire walls, alert, expecting to be fired at, I saw dead bodies, all withered, hanging on the wire, and was amazed that men could be barbarous enough to string up corpses. Then some of the corpses on the wire moved. I was looking upon the living. Every horror I had imagined fell short of this reality. Since then I have rejected as totally false the belief that men are born naturally good and only society corrupts them.

"Is this like your war, sir?" the medic sergeant asked me again later that afternoon, as we washed the dust, fear, and excitement off ourselves in water poured into my helmet.

I am limited in my ability to answer that question. I can explain my war; but the ultimate explanation of Vietnam must come from those involved there. An observer, even when blood splatters his clothes, remains outside. The basic experience of Vietnam combat is to be bound to stay in that war for a year or until one is wounded or killed. No reporter can impose this shackle on himself. He is like a doctor in an asylum. He can report; with compassion and empathy he can understand a great deal; but the final truth remains with those who must exist in madness or in the combat of their war. □

LIFE & LETTERS

A SEAGULL NAMED IRVING

by William Abrahams

THE WORD
by Irving Wallace
Simon and Schuster, \$7.95

Enormously popular and richly rewarded, Irving Wallace is one of the Midas figures among contemporary American novelists: whatever he touches turns, in a manner of speaking, to gold. Or to put it less elegantly, he is up to his hips in the American pay dirt, shoveling it. Only the other day one learned from the *New York Times* that Mr. Wallace himself, rather than his publisher, as is usually the case, had disposed of the paperback rights to his next four, as yet unwritten, novels for the sum of two and a half million dollars. Meanwhile, his current novel, *The Word*, in its hard-cover edition continues to occupy a commanding place on the best-seller lists; for his less affluent fans there will soon be the paperback edition; and ultimately the movie, the TV version, the cassette, and so on down deep, deep into the pay dirt.

Art only seldom thrives in the pay dirt—too much gold in the soil?—and it should scarcely come as a surprise to find that art and *The Word* have little to do with one another. It is a surprise, however, to find that the storytelling, traditionally the best seller's strong suit, and the mastery of the tricks of the trade, are here a good deal less secure than one might legitimately expect. The pace is sluggish, the dialogue too often didactic and expository, the narrative devices—those mini-flashbacks to the earlier

parts of a sequence (Mr. Wallace is addicted to beginning *in medias res* and then catching us up)—are used with a mechanical predictability. Judged simply as a piece of storytelling, *The Word* is markedly inferior, for example, to either Daphne du Maurier's *Rebecca* or John Le Carré's *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*. It would seem that what matters to Mr. Wallace (and his many readers) is the story he has to tell, rather than his manner of telling it, and the story, let it be said in the cliché it deserves, is a "big one," a 576-page variant on what someone—was it Cecil B. de Mille? the Reverend Billy Graham?—once called "The Greatest Story Ever Told."

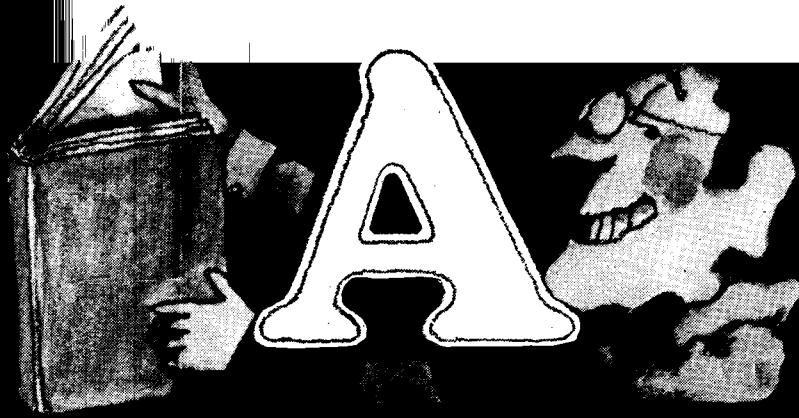
Here let me turn for assistance to the unidentified blurb-writer at Simon and Schuster, who writes with a conciseness one wishes Mr. Wallace might at times have emulated: "In the ruins of the ancient Roman seaport of Ostia Antica, an Italian archaeologist has discovered a first-century papyrus, its faded Aramaic text revealing a new gospel written by James, younger brother of Jesus, the original source of the four gospels of the New Testament. The discovery offers the modern world a new Jesus Christ, a real man who lived and walked on earth, fills in the missing years of his ministry, contradicts the existing accounts of his life—and of his supposed death."

In other words—to be precise, in Mr. Wallace's words—this new gospel establishes "the irrefutable historicity of Christ," and it is a mark of the au-

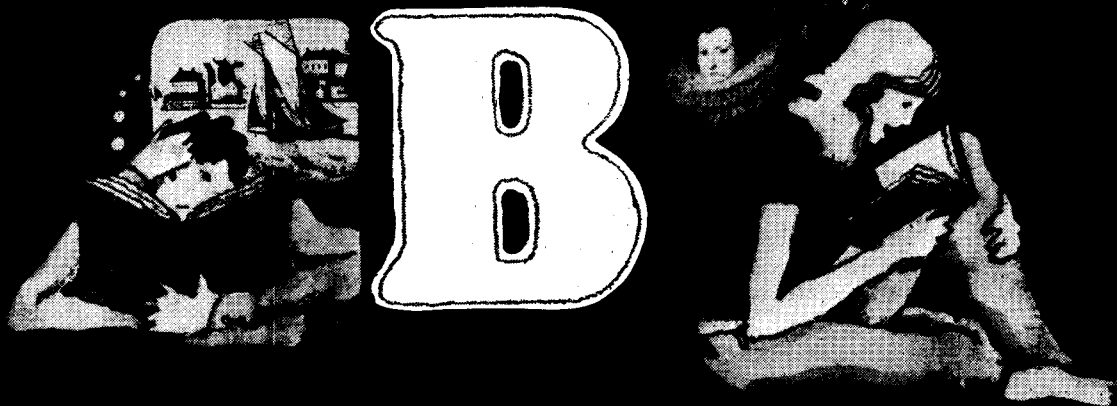
thor's ambitions that, where a more cautious man might be content merely to describe and summarize, he gives us within the novel an ample selection of the actual words of the new gospel itself. (Quite legitimately, of course, for a novelist can do whatever he pleases, and, as we shall see, Mr. Wallace has a further sanction.)

"To the world at large—*The Word*—if it is genuine—will come as a revelation [I am quoting again from the unknown blurb-writer], a call to revived faith and hope in an age of doubt and fear." Or, to quote from the reflections of the novel's hero, Steve Randall, a public relations man who has been hired by a consortium of international publishers to spread the Word, the new gospel "would usher in a faith supported by James's fresh picture of Jesus, and therefore justice, goodness, love, unity, and finally eternal hope would enter a materialistic, unjust, cynical, machine world spinning closer and closer toward Armageddon."

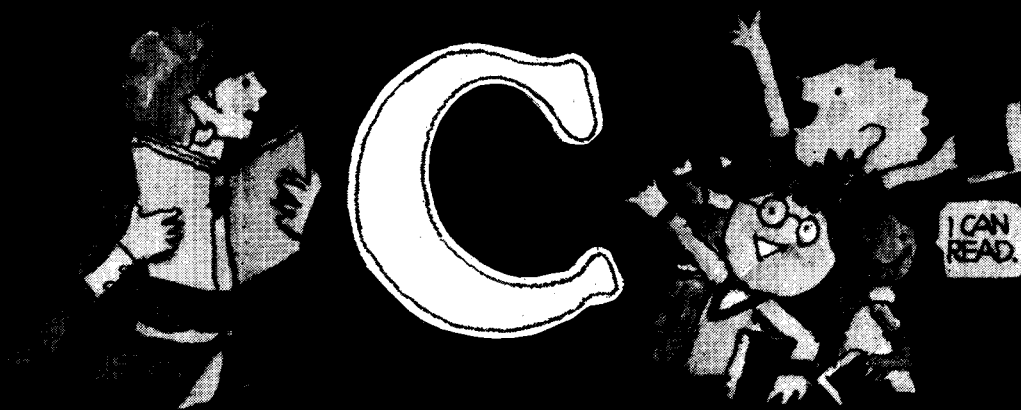
The themes are grandiose, the style florid; a reader returning from twenty years on a desert island might reasonably have expected from Mr. Wallace the standard popular novel of "Faith indomitable and triumphant," a latter-day descendant of *In His Steps*, and for a good part of the way that is precisely what he gives every indication of writing. Indeed, it is one of the peculiarities of *The Word* that it goes to great pains to convince us of the authenticity of the new gospel, drawing upon a good deal of earnest research in recent biblical, archae-



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ological, and theological studies, and then, having done so over several hundred pages, proceeds to demolish it. The novel of faith, the best seller of yesterday, gives way to the novel of doubt, skepticism, and all-pervading contempt for the official institutions, secular and religious alike, that govern our lives. We are a long way from the uplifting novels of the late Lloyd C. Douglas.

A best-selling author such as Irving Wallace is more likely to act as a reflector than as an explorer: the ideas in his novels are certain to be congenial to his readers, for his ideas are already theirs. This, it seems fair to assume, is the true secret of his popularity. What gives *The Word* its special interest—admittedly a nonliterary interest—is the extent to which it mirrors and confirms the skepticism of the moment for which it was written.

We are living, as any number of us keep saying, in an ever-widening credibility gap. It is taken for granted that our leaders, whether in the government-business, or church-business, or the business-business, infatuated with the power their position confers upon them, will lie, deceive, cheat, and defraud, ostensibly for our good, in fact for theirs. That is the faith of the disillusioned multitudes.

So, in Mr. Wallace's novel, the discovery that the new gospel is a forgery in no way dissuades the publishers and prelates, who have most to gain from it, from behaving as though it were authentic, the Word itself rather than, as it is, a gesture of revenge concocted (not too plausibly) by an ex-convict from Devil's Island carrying on a vendetta against the Church. God is not mocked, but what, Mr. Wallace seems to be asking, if He is not there? It is a strange question to come upon in a novel of this sort, though it is camouflaged by a surround of those obligatory, clinically detailed sex scenes (as explicit as anything in Dr. Reuben), glamorous name-dropping of places, hotels, and restaurants (all of them familiar to the devotees of Temple Fielding), and some huffing-puffing, private-eye-like attempts at "breathless suspense."

The literature of disillusionment that followed after World War I was addressed to what was, in the phrase of the period, "the civilized minority," who found in it an articulation at the level of art of their own de-

spair. A novel such as *The Word*, coming after a decade of Vietnamese war that has bred a virulent disdain for the pieties of church and state, is aimed at a much broader and less sophisticated audience, but one as attuned to it as, in their time, the early readers of *The Waste Land* and *Antic Hay* were attuned to them. It is the mass appeal of the negativism of *The Word* that is so enlightening. To each reader it says: Do your own thing—that contemporary translation from

the Polonian ("to thine own self be true")—for there is nothing else worth the doing.

Significantly, I think, that is the message, too, of Richard Bach's *Jonathan Livingston Seagull*, the modest, sufferably coy, anthropomorphic fable of a seagull named Jonathan who refuses to do as the flock does and ignores the wisdom of the Elders, determined to fly on his own. It's the book that has supplanted *The Word* at the top of the best-seller lists.

STEAK MEDIA, PLEASE

by Edwin Newman

By reputation, I am a gourmet. The reputation was cheaply won. It came about when I found myself living in Britain during the period of austerity after World War II, when anybody whose gastronomic horizons went beyond cabbage, brussels sprouts, and codfish was called a gourmet.

Not that I regret that period in England. It was rich in experience. I remember the time I asked the flavor of the ice cream listed on the menu, and was told, "Why, no flavor, sir," which turned out to be correct. Or the waitress who, when asked for oil to put on hors d'oeuvres, replied, "The only oil we have at the moment, sir, is the oil we cook the chips in, and it's already been used, so it wouldn't be good." Or the waiter who, when recommending rice pilaf, generously explained, "It isn't an English dish, sir, but it is very good." Or the waiter on the train between London and Penzance who, when asked what kind of soup was available, did not give the traditional answer, "Thick or thin." Instead, he replied, "Soup as what the chef made."

Things were pretty bad in those days, and they had their effect on the confidence of the British. Even the food advertisements didn't make interesting claims. I remember a green pea boasting that it was "first choice for second vegetable."

It has changed greatly now, of course. London is a very good place for food and drink, and has been for years. It has much to do with the foreign influence. (I don't mean that Britain is entirely transformed. My daughter went into an English restau-

rant not long ago, and she and her companion asked whether they might have some wine. The proprietor looked at them with annoyance. "We don't," he said, "have ween and all that tackle.")

We have foreign influence in the United States, too, as may be seen from the free use of the word gourmet. The dictionary defines it as a connoisseur in eating and drinking, an epicure. That, however, is a noun, and the word gourmet is used much more in this country as an adjective. For example, foods that used to be known as delicacies, and which you would get at the delicatessen or fancy grocery, are now known as gourmet foods, and you get them at a gourmet store. The other day, I saw a package of gourmet blintzes. I don't think that the blintz, if that is the singular, sees itself in that way. Maybe it could team up with knish lorraine.

This use of the word gourmet is part of the increasing popularity of foreign words and phrases in the field of food. Some of these words and phrases are imperfectly understood, and you never know what you are going to run into when you enter a restaurant these days. I have come upon such exotic items as chicken soup à la raine; eminced chicken tetrizzini; fillet de mignon, I suppose from the opera by Ambroise Thomas; bristling sardines, which may have been angry at being packed in as though they were in a New York subway; and for dessert, cake du jour. Some Americans think you can turn an English word to French by adding an *e* to it, such as caramel custarde, and fruite.

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Similar to cake du jour in the way it brings together two languages is the dish, eggs andalouse. On the menu of a French restaurant on Forty-eighth Street, now torn down, it came out eggs andalouse, which suggests that the chef spoke with an Italian accent, and that when he was asked where he got the recipe, he replied, from his Aunt Louise, which is how that happened.

It was at another restaurant that I was offered salaud de tomates, canapé d'anchovies, and egg in gelée, and invited to choose wine from a charto de vino. It reminded me of the store I once saw in Washington that sold objects d'art. And the liquor store in New York that proclaimed that it was selling wine of a fabulose vintage. And the place that called itself a saloon de thé. Or the time in that citadel of sophistication, San Francisco, the San Francisco *Chronicle* described Brigitte Bardot as "hot pommes de terre." I had never thought of her in that way. Instead I had taken up the words of a New York businessman in another connection, and thought of Miss Bardot as a new Joan D. Arc, who filled her countrymen with spirit de corps. (This, I might add, in spite of the number of nuptial ceremonies she had gone through.)

When it comes to misuse of language, it is possible to go on indefinitely about what is happening in the United States, in English as well as in foreign languages. So much so that I sometimes think of asking for my steak "media, please." Perhaps those of us who are troubled by these developments would be better off dropping out, getting a chaise-lounge, and using it even before the onset of our reclining years, especially when we are made to feel quasi by the bonzana of misspellings and incorrect usages we see. Maybe our trouble arises from our being, unequivocally and homogeneously, psuedo-intellectuals.

Sometimes, psuedo-intellectual or not, one is simply overwhelmed. A recent visit to Lincoln, Nebraska, produced a restaurant that offered Maderia wine, and quoted Louis Pasteur to the effect that wine was the most healthful and hygienic of beverages. The restaurant served, if it said so itself, Food Supérbo. Said food defied pronunciation, if not eating. Another establishment, a block away, listed on its menu the Italianoburger, which

(Advertisement)

September Report on

Atlantic Monthly Press books



Like baseball scouts, publishers pride themselves on being able to spot a natural. Sometimes it's easy. When **DAVID RHODES** sent in the manuscript of **THE LAST FAIR DEAL GOING DOWN**, the first reader reported: "It's a long time since I felt 'devotion' to a first novel. Contact with an imagination as powerful and original as this is a blue moon event." Being partial to blue moon events, we sat down and read. What we found was a novel threatening to burst at the seams, crammed with energy, character, and insight—the kind of novel they say isn't being written any more. A natural.

The Last Fair Deal Going Down is both a chronicle of the Sledge family—Luke, whose tall-tale frontier beginnings end in a deadly drinking contest; John Charles, a bootlegger hanged for the shotgun murder of his wife; Walt, a street fighter; Will, a compulsive voyeur; Nellie, a victim of rape and blindness; Reuben, the narrator, who must understand them all—and of their city, Des Moines. But beneath Des Moines there is another, underground city, both a geographic and psychic inferno whose presence haunts the reader until he too must go down with Reuben and confront it. Here, in the climax of the novel, is as stunning an imaginative conception as we've seen in a long time in American fiction, a place where situations become myths and what began as an adventure and tragicomic saga becomes a work of terrifying vision.

**THE LAST FAIR DEAL
GOING DOWN**

by **David Rhodes**

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LITTLE, BROWN

was a hamburger on an English muffin with mozzarella and pizza sauce. Why was the English muffin left out of the title?

Speaking of menus, a French restaurant in New York, or at any rate a restaurant with a French name, posts a menu du dinner. I was, as a well-known sports announcer has said, numbstruck by this, though I should not have been, having shortly before passed L'Embassy Coiffure, and a drugstore that listed among the perfumes it sold, "Reve gauche."

As long as I'm complaining—and my friends say that as long as I am awake I am complaining—which isn't true because I covered the first annual international banana festival at Fulton, Kentucky, and saw a one-ton banana pudding being made, in a Plexiglas container, of bananas, custard, and gingersnaps, and did not say an untoward word—as long as I'm complaining, I will go on with another favorite subject—my theory that 98 percent of the members of the waiters' union became waiters because they couldn't remember the jobs they originally wanted to get. I say this in memory of the old, passé assumption that waiters in a restaurant would remember what the customers ordered. There was a day when waiters would commit orders to memory as a matter of course, and when they brought your order, they would put it in front of you without mistake. You did not get somebody else's steak, and he did not get your lamb chop, and nobody thought there was anything extraordinary in that. Waiters whose memories were unreliable wrote down the orders, and did it in such a way that they connected the items in question with those who asked for them. No more.

Not that anybody wants waiters, or anybody else, to grovel. But the art of waiting has undergone a transformation. From a man who could take legitimate pride in his knowledge of food and his ability to serve it, the American waiter has become a mere messenger. If he is new to this country, he is given a short course in basic English. He is taught to say, "Who gets duh?" Then he is taught to say the names of the items on the menu, which go after "Who gets duh?" and with that he is ready to work. Not long ago, I was in a group of five in a well-known New York restaurant. One person in the group ordered des-

sert, only one, and there was conversation between this person and the waiter about what it was to be. Nobody else took part in the conversation. Thirty seconds later, the waiter

appeared with the single dessert, and with a single phrase, reached the top of his calling. "Who," he asked triumphantly, "who gets the sherbet?"

BALLET

BALANCHINE/STRAVINSKY

by Richard Poirier

For the week of June 18 to 25 and for many weeks of preparation before that, all the resources of the New York City Ballet and its orchestra were directed toward a festival in honor of what would have been the ninetieth birthday of Igor Stravinsky. Thirty-five of his scores were performed, and of the thirty which were choreographed, twenty were premiered during the Festival. It was an astonishing feat, unequaled in the history of ballet, and the occasion was variously described as "a week of miracles," "the most imaginative week in ballet since the Diaghilev ballet stormed Paris more than 60 years ago," and "one of the highlights of 20th century art." No one who saw the performances would want to quibble, especially those who, without need of An Event of this sort, have always considered the New York City Ballet and its dancers the best in the world, capable of working in the styles of any other company and of executing works which no other group could hope to perform as well and most could not do at all: *Concerto Barocco*, *Four Temperaments*, *Bugaku*, *Apollo*, *Agon*, and *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, to mention only a few.

In the history of ballet, Balanchine at New York's State Theater is equivalent to Shakespeare at London's Globe. It is such a privilege to be alive in his time that no opportunity to see a new work of his should be missed, the more so because he has shown little inclination to preserve his work on film or by existing methods of notation. For the Festival he created eight new ballets; at least two of these, the *Violin Concerto in D* and *Duo Concertant*, and probably *Divertimento from Le Baiser de la Fée* and *Symphony in Three Movements*, are among his masterpieces.

But the big event, if one were to

believe advance notices and engendered excitements, was to be *Pulcinella*, choreographed jointly by Balanchine and Jerome Robbins. It starred Violette Verdy and Edward Villella, the two best dancers in a company where many might claim the title: Allegra Kent, Kay Mazzo, and Gelsey Kirkland for the women; Helgi Tomasson, Peter Martins, and John Clifford for the men. Besides, Balanchine and Robbins were themselves to take part as a pair of beggars. The ballet was the most lavish of the new works and required the largest expenditure of money and time. Villella proved here, as in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Harlequinade*, that he is a superb comic actor, full of exuberant scurrility, and Verdy danced with her unemphatic grace and pliancy. She has a way of folding her movements one into the other so that the audience is understandably shy about applauding her for what appear to be merely local achievements. And it was this lovely continuity of hers, this poise which, without its being in any way inconsistent with the general movement, nonetheless prompted some of my own impatience with the hopped-up razzle-dazzlement of the whole thing. Perhaps *Pulcinella* ought to look more like *commedia dell'arte* spectacle than dance, but in this case Villella's unnecessarily baggy costume obscured the wonderful things he was doing: the remarkable paces, one moment broadly slapstick, the next surreptitiously raffish, and, with Verdy, the comically zestful play of hands and feet even while both were relaxed into that ease which communicates their assurance in each other's supreme competence.

One good effect of the *Pulcinella* evening is that those who might have come principally to An Event were made aware that the company could

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supply one and lots of Fun, too. It could be Monumental, at least for an evening. But while the company had indeed been unusually accommodating, it wasn't seriously compromised, and loyal old fans—who are quite different from the fans for the Royal Ballet or for whatever assemblage is sent from Moscow calling itself the Bolshoi—needn't worry.

If one worries at all, it is because the City Ballet is unique in a number of ways. It doesn't glamorize itself or its dancers, who are listed alphabetically within three categories of Principals (nine men, eight women), Soloists (eleven men, eight women), and Corps de Ballet (thirty-nine women, eight boys). A number of the ballets are conspicuous for the plainness of costume, often no more than white shirts and black practice tights or skirts ("sweaty T-shirts," as a French critic next to me sniffed after a dazzling performance of *Agon* which no French group in whatever costume could have executed). It is unique, too, in its frequent rotation of the principal roles in any given ballet, so that no one "owns" a part. The company is constantly at work on many new ballets, constantly stu-

dents together, not only for Balanchine but for other choreographers like Robbins, John Clifford, John Taras, Richard Tanner, Todd Bolender, Jacques d'Amboise. The whole direction is away from theatrical glorifications and temperaments, and the solidifications that go with them, and toward a sort of working commune. The choreography, while not a cooperative venture, is remembered sometimes better, when a work is revived, by older dancers than by Balanchine, and is handed from them to younger ones, and the creation of dance is almost always intimately derived from the physical capacities and talents of the dancers on hand.

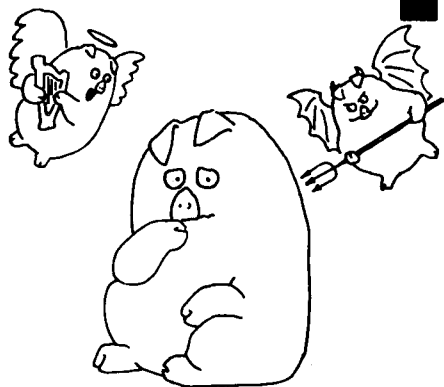
All this is a way of saying that there may never have been a better example than this company of art as work, as distinguished from art as culture, and this is but one reason for wishing it were as readily available to the whole nation as it is to New York. The New York City Ballet of Balanchine exists not on the accumulated results of its labors but in its labors. Nothing it does is ever quite finished before its premiere—Balanchine was still creating and re-creating whole sequences only a day or so before the

Festival—and even pieces in the set repertoire are often revised whenever a new dancer takes on one of the principal roles.

In this courting of work, this pleasure in the making, Balanchine and Stravinsky are, as in so much else, natural partners. "I am at ease," Stravinsky said in the last of his taped interviews for TV, "in the difficulties of performance." Indeed the Festival showed how both men invite difficulties by being so eclectic of all styles, from the dance hall to the academy, while at the same time being so chaste. At a simpler level, the strict beat of Stravinsky's music, what Balanchine has called the "vitality in the substance of each measure," the life that "goes on within each silence," is naturally attuned to the Balanchine mode. That helps explain why, when still in his teens and before meeting Stravinsky, Balanchine had already tried to set some of his early scores to dance and why, since the beginning of their formal collaborations in 1924, he has choreographed twenty-five of them. Balanchine is accomplished enough as a musician to have once thought of becoming a conductor or concert pianist. His greater interest in music than in story for ballet is not a prejudice; it is a preference no other choreographer can so legitimately afford. While Stravinsky's beat has taught him something, as he says, about the authority over time necessary to the creation of movements in space, his own three-dimensional rendering of scores taught Stravinsky things he had not before appreciated, he admitted, even in his own music.

The repeated characterizations of Balanchine's work as "abstract" are based on erroneous assumptions: that the literary fictions which help support the ballets done by Bolshoi or Stuttgart, for example, have more reality, more humanity than do the sounds of notes that are made to move with the special life Stravinsky imparts to them, or that the danced stories of *Romeo and Juliet* or of *Eugene Onegin* have more flesh and blood than the movements measured to the tempo of Stravinsky's music by Balanchine's dancers. Perhaps one should say pulsation rather than tempo in order to suggest both the effect of the music, with its vibrant silences, and the reality of the human bodies, their human vulnerability,

moralist pig



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undisguised and unalleviated by role-playing, as they move to that music. Balanchine's dance is an effort to discover how specific bodies can realize possible adjustments not to a story but to one another, and to do this while simultaneously discovering a mutual relationship to a musical score.

If Balanchine is mostly indifferent to stories and cartoons, the reason is not that he is abstract but rather that he is often heartrendingly elemental. His "subject," the "story" of his best work, is an irreducible one: the difficulties and possibilities of partnering. While this could be said to be the implicit subject of all ballets, most of them, outside the repertoire of Balanchine, are motivated finally by some equivalence in movement to a known literary plot or a familiar literary image. Balanchine's dancers have to work especially hard, and those who would appreciate what they are doing have to watch with special alertness, because there is usually no "characterization" to depend on, no story to enact, seldom even feelings to express, except those that attend the acts of performance and of partnering. This is not to say that no feelings or emotions are engendered. The emotions called forth are in fact extremely intense precisely because they adhere so closely to the beautiful and ultimate necessities of the human body as it enacts its responsibility to other bodies and to music. One's response partakes of the feeling Stravinsky expressed when, in speaking of classical ballet, he referred to "the beauty of its *ordonnance* and the aristocratic austerity of its form."

Nothing Balanchine has ever done is more beautiful in this respect than the two best pieces in the Festival. *Duo Concertant* and *Violin Concerto*, each featuring, and fashioned to, the partnering of Peter Martins and Kay Mazzo, and, nearly as good, the *Divertimento from Le Baiser de la Fée* with Helgi Tomasson—a dancer who showed to enormous advantage during the Festival for his charm, precision, and power—and the greatly talented and appealing Patricia McBride. These three works differ from the fourth I mentioned at the outset, *Symphony in Three Movements*. With its rapid mixture of styles for the chorus, including some Busby Berkeley steppings that are a delight to the eye and the ear and some

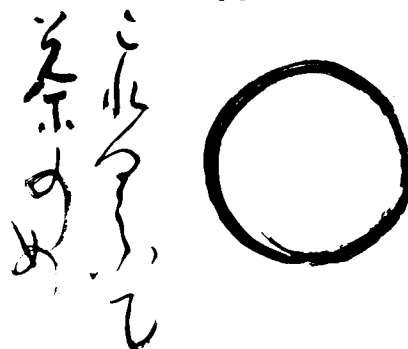
fiendishly difficult movements for the estimable male trio of Villella, Tomasson, and Robert Weiss, the *Symphony* cannot be fully comprehended or appreciated just yet, even by those who dance it. Its figurations, like *Agon's*, are at once exotic and wholly without excess, full of apparent semaphore, especially with the arms, but semaphore from another planet.

To understand how *Symphony* differs from the other three, one need only watch the sturdy yet gallant athleticism it calls forth from Tomasson and compare it to the delicacies demanded of him in *Baiser*. There is, for example, his difficult and beautiful low lift of McBride which assists rather than impedes her forward movement, and the equally graceful and mysterious tumbings of his arms one over the other after a series of extraordinary jumps.

With *Baiser*, that is, we are in the realm of Balanchinian romance, and here Balanchine is more erotic, more physically intricate and intimate, more tender when it comes to the relations of a man and a woman than any choreographer has ever been. He genuinely likes women and their bodies, so much so that Diaghilev, who did not like them in all ways, once complained, without any intention of being hilarious, that Balanchine "had a morbid interest in women." The two *pas de deux* in *Violin Concerto*, the one with Karin von Aroldingen and Jean-Pierre Bonnefous, the other with Kay Mazzo and Peter Martins, bring tears to the eyes not for any story but for an inventiveness, inseparable from a kind of awe and piety, with which Balanchine unwittingly makes a kind of plot out of the exploration of one body by another, their discovery of a shared language which, like any other language, at once promotes union and further complicates it.

Balanchine seems abstract only to old-fashioned minds who come looking for stories and miss the story that is there, in the bodies and the sounds. The Festival offered a particularly good object lesson, which one hopes will be repeated in other American cities as well as in Paris, London, and Moscow, because it is possible to see exactly how Balanchine's new choreography makes use of specific bodily traits in his dancers which might not otherwise have been visibly to their advantage. Perhaps this is

a Western approach to



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most true of Peter Martins, who in *Duo Concertant* and *Violin Concerto* was, with Kay Mazzo, the greatest beneficiary of Balanchine's genius during the week. He is the tallest principal dancer in the company and among the most conspicuous on stage because he is one of the only two clearly blond male dancers, and he has an unusually large and handsome head. In the past, except in *Apollo*, where the male lead is treated by the women as a god anyway—but where d'Amboise in the Festival danced like a god of catatonia—Martins has sometimes seemed too large in his sense of himself for the roles given him. His body from the waist to the toes is shorter than from the waist to the top of his head, and the great length of his arms has often been a problem, though they are perfect for *Apollo*, where, for the first time in ballet, the male dancer is made to support three women at once. In *Violin Concerto* Balanchine achieves one of his most beautiful moments when, near the end of the Mazzo-Martins *pas de deux*, she leans her back against his chest while he stretches his right arm out over her shoulder toward stage front, and with the most graceful turning of his hand, her head cradled now in his shoulder, rocks her gently back and forth. Similarly, in *Duo Concertant*, the length of his arms is beautifully suited to the series of poignant moments when the dancers are in darkness and, before bringing their bodies together, meet by each extending an arm, he appropriately more searchingly than she, into a spot of light between them where they then join in more complicated and more erotic positions.

In all the new Balanchine ballets such arm movements have become more conspicuous and suggestive than before: the arms of the man and the woman revolving around each other, linkages and turns of the body, wrist on wrist or by hooking at the elbow, arms moving in geometric planes, with the woman standing in front of the man. It is as if the dancers were past hand-clasping for purposes of lending support to their mutual effort, as if they were discovering possibilities more intimate by the virtue of their cabalistic strangeness.

This stress upon the attainment of physical coordination in original and elaborate forms also lends a special beauty to the uninterrupted momen-

tum of most of these new works. In the first *pas de deux* in *Violin Concerto*, von Aroldingen goes through a series of handsomely slow cartwheels at the end of which she is immediately drawn up, with no hint of discontinuity or strain, into further movements by Bonnefous. Not once in this ballet do the dancers move away from one another to reposition themselves for the next musical passage. The music is not treated as if it had discreet parts with each offering a different kind of show-off opportunity. Its plasticity is consistent with Balanchine's and Stravinsky's sense of silence and pause in music, not as an interruption but as part of the musical composition, its pulsing life.

The Festival showed how much the nearly half-century of collaboration between Balanchine and Stravinsky worked to the enlargement of both. It should enlarge all of us. It has helped create a kind of theater, a kind of art which requires a detailed love and attentiveness to the wonders of perfor-

mance, a delight in art not as a thing to be contemplated after the fact of its composition but as an act of composition. One of the potential instruments of creation, which is sound, is made to meet, to serve, and be served by another, which is movement. The fact of work, of hard work, so necessary to the mounting of the Festival, was inherent in the nature of the ballets by Balanchine that were its special glory. The movement of the dance was always difficult but never a strain; it revealed the forms of Stravinsky's sound and the forms of the dancers' bodies mutually at work measuring the limits of space, testing the disciplines of time. The New York City Ballet's Stravinsky Festival is the best answer to those who might legitimately have wondered what to point to as an example of how art might turn our attention away from predigested literary truths and fictional banalities so that it might flow with the active, laboring forms of life.

THE PERIPATETIC REVIEWER

by Edward Weeks

ELEANOR: The Years Alone
by Joseph P. Lash
Norton, \$9.95

This is the sequel to Mr. Lash's monumental account of a unique partnership in the White House and it is well that it should stand apart. During the seventeen years of Eleanor Roosevelt's widowhood she never ceased growing: no other First Lady has ever so gained in the affection of people at home and abroad and certainly no other has ever exerted such personal influence in her writing, and most importantly, in her speaking and her statesmanship as a member of the United States delegation to the United Nations. At Mrs. Roosevelt's burial service in Hyde Park, attended by the three Presidents who had succeeded FDR, Mr. Lash reports that a friend of hers, David Gurewitsch, went up to General Eisenhower and asked: "How could it happen that you did not make use of this lady? We had no better ambassador." The general shrugged and moved away. "I made use of her," said Truman,

who had overheard. "I told her she was the First Lady of the World."

After Franklin's death Mrs. Roosevelt's first job was to vacate the White House and then empty the Big House at Hyde Park of everything—linen, china, silver, jewelry, furs, furniture, books, ship models, painting, and mountains of keepsakes including "[Pa's] baby clothes in a box and some of his early essays." These she divided among the children, keeping her share at Val-Kill, which with 825 acres of farmlands she had bought from the estate with all of her own money, a decision predicated on her son Elliott's willingness to live there with her. Elliott, who needed help, became the manager of her radio and television programs, and throughout this physical toil, which would have killed a horse, she continued to write her daily column, then syndicated in ninety papers. She declined the pension of \$85,000 which Congress was ready to bestow and drew the line then and ever after at running for political office. Her name topped the list of delegates to attend the first meet-

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ing of the United Nations Assembly, and when she protested that she had no experience in foreign affairs, President Truman refused to be put off. With her acceptance she entered a new world.

The chapters describing her performance at the United Nations are among the finest in the book and will long stand as an example of one woman's influence in that sensitive forum. Her first clash (over the forced repatriation of refugees) came with Vishinsky, and in this the Soviet's grand inquisitor was routed by her extemporaneous rebuttal, "the most important speech ever given by an American delegate without a prepared text," as "Sandy" Sandifer, her State Department aide, later said. She shone like a beacon in the 1948 session leading up to the Declaration of Human Rights and when at 3 A.M. the final vote was forty-eight countries in favor, two absent, eight abstentions (including the USSR), the Assembly gave her a rare standing ovation in recognition of her leadership. This was not fortuitous: her comments on the Russian tactics and the necessity of facing them with confidence are revealing: "We will have to crawl together, running will be out of the question until all of us have gained far more confidence in each other than we have now. . . ." Her patience was inexhaustible.

Her letters and her comments, so well set in Mr. Lash's matrix, show how closely she held her family despite the extraneous demands: her politically ambitious, impulsive sons she aided discreetly; she helped pay Anna's debts in the television show they did together over two hundred stations; her most successful book and the most difficult to write, *This I Remember*, was, as the author says, "her final service of love to her husband's work." Of course she invited criticism. The scurrilities of Westbrook Pegler she did not heed, but when Cardinal Spellman in an ill-judged broadside denounced her opposition to federal aid for the parochial schools as "documents of discrimination unworthy of an American mother," she was wounded, and her calm, reasoned reply with its devastating conclusion put the politically minded prelate in his place.

In her age she encouraged and advised the young leaders of promise: Adlai Stevenson, and, after hesita-

tion, JFK. Wise, fearless, and modest, she went to the Middle East, Russia, and to the Orient to see the truth and to answer the questions about the United States. As the plane approached Karachi, a companion pointed to the huge crowd at the airport. "That's not for us," she said. "That's for someone of importance who is arriving." But they were there for her and when they knelt in the street as she passed, her comment was, "I hadn't realized how they cared about Franklin."

I COME AS A THIEF
by Louis Auchincloss
Houghton Mifflin, \$6.95

This story of Mr. Auchincloss's is different and I like it: it is a novel of principle, which is rare in any season. While the background is the New York and Long Island of wealth and sophistication which the author has satirized before, the foreground is monopolized by an "outsider," the confident, self-made Tony Lowder, whose ability and charm have carried him to the point where he seems poised for a successful assault on Washington. Tony's grandfather was an Irish immigrant who made money as a contractor, but now in the third generation the family has gone to seed and at forty-three Tony is the white-haired boy: he has married into the Dutch-proud Pieter Bogardus clan and he has a law partner, Max Leonard, who idolizes him and is wily enough to steer the firm and raise the money Tony needs. Running for the State Senate as a Democrat in a traditionally Republican district he attracted statewide attention, and after his narrow defeat the party found a place for him on the Securities and Exchange Commission, keeping him in the public eye until he can make it to Congress or the Treasury. So much as the curtain goes up.

Only once has Tony been troubled by scruple. As a boy he was light-fingered, pilfering from his friends and shops until detected by Grandpa Daly. The old man's rage reduced Tony's father to tears and in retribution the boy, one by one, returned what he had stolen. Tony, mature, had no scruple in borrowing funds for his campaign from Joan, his wealthy mistress, but as the recession squeezes him into realizing how deeply he and Max are in debt, a quirk—a prin-

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ciple?—stops him from appealing to
Joan again and he wangles the
money the hard way, from the head
of a firm he is supposed to be investi-
gating. This masterful scene is fol-
lowed by a second, a Sunday lun-
cheon on Long Island when he is
seized with remorse.

From the moment of Tony's re-
crimination the narrative gathers
force. "I've done a wicked criminal
thing," he tells Joan, "and I disgust
myself." What makes it so ironic is
that he has all the cards to play it
safe: he was bribed to do nothing; he
did nothing, and when Menzies Lip-
pard found the four million they
needed to cover, suspicion drifted
away. But Tony's obsession will not
permit him to be silent and in his de-
termination to confess to the U.S.
District Attorney, whatever the con-
sequences, he ranges against him the
inner circle of Lee, his wife, fearful
for herself and the children, of Max,
who runs for protection, and of Pieter
Bogardus, his father-in-law, the tax
lawyer, so bitter and so mean in his
castigation. The scene between them
at the club when Tony breaks the
news is one of the best in the book.
Of the women close to him only
Tony's mother and Joan, who has
been living in a hell of her own, are
unshaken in their sympathy.

THE HUDSON RIVER & ITS PAINTERS

by John K. Howat
Viking, \$25.00

The Hudson River School of paint-
ing began more or less by accident in
1825. A young man named Thomas
Cole, recently turned artist and not
particularly interested in making por-
traits of provincial bigwigs, did a few
views of the Hudson River which he
displayed in a framemaker's shop in
New York City. There they caught
the eye of Colonel John Trumbull, a
painter whose local reputation rather
exceeded his talent. Since Trumbull
had done enough poor landscapes
himself to know a good one when he
saw it, his enthusiasm was immediate
and generous. Cole became the fash-
ion and the fashion attracted a num-
ber of other painters who preferred
the light, the water, the ramparts, and
the trees of the Hudson in their in-
finite variety to the relative monotony
of painting well-dressed sitters posed
and on their best behavior.

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alesced rapidly and flourished for fifty years. It was truly a school, the first of its kind in the United States, in that the painters knew each other's work and shared aesthetic theory as well as subject matter. They were not, of course, all permanently anchored in the Hudson. Albert Bierstadt, one of the best, is probably better known for his paintings of the Western frontier than for his New York scenes, and Winslow Homer, coming at the end of the line, is included only because he did some brilliant watercolors of loggers on the upper reaches. After Cole the two who most appeal to me are Frederic E. Church and Jasper Cropsey, who, following his apprenticeship with Cole, painted in London and there exhibited his finest canvas, *Autumn on the Hudson River*.

There were many in the school, some known today only anonymously, and what they produced was new and different in Occidental art. They saw man and nature as the Chinese did, although there is small reason to suppose that any of them were consciously aware of the fact. What stirred them was their preoccupation with wide scenic panoramas against which buildings, shipping, or human figures were reduced to trivialities. Their inspiration seems to have developed spontaneously in response to the vast emptiness of the unsettled continent and to the majesty of Storm King, the Palisades, the secluded cove, and the white waterfall.

The 102 reproductions, most of them in color, have been arranged not chronologically but as one would traverse the river from the Narrows in the harbor to the source. There is, of course, some influence from Claude Lorraine in the painting, a touch from the Barbizon School, and more than a touch from Turner, but the great canvases, such as Church's *Winter Landscape from Olana*, or that brooding, dramatic oil sketch looking toward the Catskills, which he painted in 1870, and the incomparable *Sunny Morning on the Hudson* by Thomas Cole, are the work of native genius too long unheeded by curators.

The reproductions are of high quality and the preface by James Biddle, like the foreword by Carl Carmer, pleads for the preservation of the Hudson River so long abused and polluted by industry.

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SHORT REVIEWS: BOOKS

by Phoebe Adams

ASWAN! by Michael Heim. Knopf, \$6.95. In deliberately flat, commonplace prose, Mr. Heim tells a wild tale of ecological folly and international bungling. The novel is part political satire, part science fiction, part save-the-environment tract. It works effectively on all three levels, and one would be enough to scare the reader Nile green. Translated by J. Maxwell Brownjohn.

BELA LUGOSI'S WHITE CHRISTMAS by Paul West. Harper & Row, \$6.95. Mr. West's novel starts off with a provocative ironic twist: a psychiatrist suffering from boredom and wife trouble becomes so envious of the gaudy imagination of one of his patients that he connives at the fellow's escape from the hospital. Since this particular patient has been locked up for murder, among other aberrations, the story assumes a considerable degree of suspense when he starts roaming about the English countryside. But suspense is not really the author's purpose. He is exploring the border line of sanity, and keeps doctor and patient tacking back and forth across it. The writing is energetic and clever. It also goes on just a trifle too long, for Mr. West has so much fun pretending to be inside the mind of a mad strangler that he tends to linger there and forgets to move his plot.

SPLENDOR AND DEATH OF JOAQUIN MURIETA by Pablo Neruda. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$7.95 and \$2.45. Mr. Neruda set his poetic drama of racial prejudice in California in the days of the gold rush, using the Chilean bandit Murieta as an embodiment of the courage and sufferings of all Latin Americans in the United States. The author himself described the work as not only a tragedy but "also intended as a melodrama, an opera, and a pantomime," and urged "all directors to invent situations and props to their own liking." This airy granting of carte blanche has led the translator, Ben Belitt, to rewrite all the speeches of the gringo villains into modern Hollywood Westernese,

thereby converting a mob of faceless, mindless, robotlike brutes into something that suggests good old John Wayne gone wrong. In spite of this minor tampering, the play retains powerful images and an extravagant originality of invention. The Spanish text is included.

THE ROOTS OF COINCIDENCE by Arthur Koestler. Random House, \$5.95. Pointing out that the science of physics now operates and gets results by laws that would have been not only unknown but unthinkable a century ago, Mr. Koestler defends experiments in extrasensory perception on the grounds that an essentially materialistic concept of the nature and capability of the human mind may be as obsolete as the Newtonian universe. This kind of argument always suggests sympathetic magic, but it can be, and in this case is, impressive. It will also be fairly hard going for anyone short of information or interest concerning physics and psychical research.

THE SANTA CLAUS BANK ROBBERY by A. C. Greene. Knopf, \$6.95. A reconstruction, admittedly requiring some guesswork by Mr. Greene, of what must surely have been the most muddleheaded robbery in history. It took place on December 23, 1927, in Cisco, Texas. The robbers, three ex-convicts and an amateur recruit, did everything wrong, from using a Santa Claus mask that attracted a tail of kids, to mislaying the loot. In spite of its comic aspects, the affair is a gruesome piece of last frontier Americana. Mr. Greene's style is utilitarian, but his story is chilling.

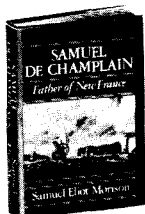
A WINDOW ON RUSSIA by Edmund Wilson. Farrar, Straus & Giroux, \$7.95. For roughly thirty years, the late Edmund Wilson studied Russian language and literature, now and again reporting on his discoveries. This volume assembles the originally scattered dispatches and they prove to be what one would expect from a critic of Wilson's stature—learned, elegantly written, perceptive, and full of shrewd, highly independent judgments. The collection begins with an amusing description of the horrors of Russian grammar, discusses various authors, touches on Wilson's famous row with Vladimir Nabokov over the latter's translation into English of *Ev-*

geni Onegin, and ends with a rather testy tribute to Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Every essay is a delight.

GREAT HUMOR edited by Louis Untermeyer. McGraw-Hill, \$9.95. Mr. Untermeyer is a man of taste and knowledge and a deft translator of comic verse. He is also honest. When he promises great humor, every item in the anthology has to qualify for the adjective. Now the standard proof that any type of writing is great is its power of endurance, so here come all the antique sacred cows—Aesop, Petronius, Rabelais, Swift, Lamb, Gilbert, Twain, and company—in a thundering herd. There is nothing wrong with any single piece in the collection; taken together, they produce an impression of déjà vu.

BLACK ENGLISH by J. L. Dillard. Random House, \$10.00. The author's foreword briskly states the purpose of this study, which "attempts to investigate the important and interesting ways in which Black English, the language of about eighty percent of Americans of African ancestry, differs from other varieties of American English. . . . According to my thesis, differences from other English dialects are traceable to normal historical factors, specifically to language-contact phenomena associated with the West African slave trade and with European maritime expansion in general, and to survivals from West African languages." The mass of evidence presented by the author in support of this thesis is persuasive, but has one odd aspect: while the examples of Black English are, for the most part, instantly comprehensible to a reader equipped only with standard English, the author's standard English explanations, riddled with technical linguistic terms, are as baffling as Eskimo.

COUNSEL FOR THE DECEIVED by Philip G. Schrag. Pantheon, \$5.95. Mr. Schrag was the first lawyer for New York's Department of Consumer Affairs. His account of his work is alternately hilarious and demoralizing. What he discovered in trying to obtain legal redress for the victims of a string of swindles was not that the typical victim is a poor ignoramus who cannot read the fine print, but that the typical court favors the swindler.



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W. Shakespeare

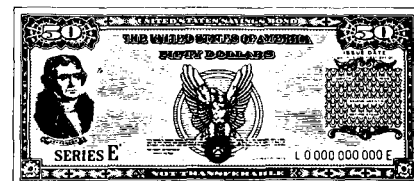


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DEADLINE FOR COPY: 15th of the second month prior to the issue. (Example: November copy due September 15 - in subscriber households by mid-October.)

THE ATLANTIC
CLASSIFIED DEPARTMENT
8 ARLINGTON STREET
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02116

HEADING

10-word minimum.

90¢ per word 1-time rate

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